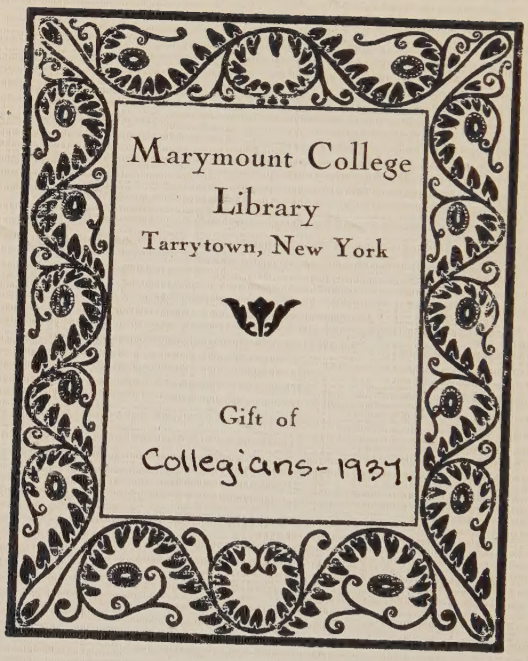
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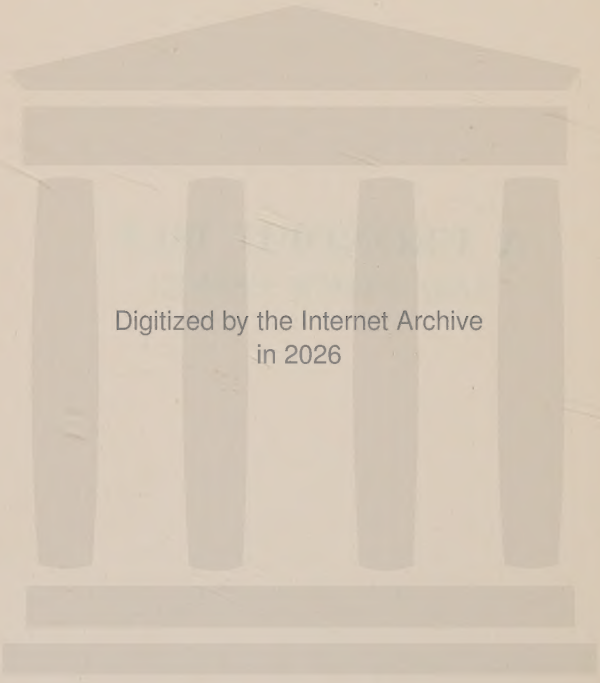
A FRONDED ISLE
AND OTHER ESSAYS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A FRONDED ISLE

AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

E. V. LUCAS

GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
A Fronded Isle	1
The Real Painters	28
The Fun of the Fair	34
Teaching the Grandmother	40
Little Journeys	45
I. Goodwood	45
II. Wilton	49
III. Longleat	54
IV. Bromham and Thomas Moore	59
V. A Hill-Top Tomb	64
The Two Lunches	69
The Road-Makers	73
Old Maps	79
The Five Varieties	85
German Wanderings:	
I. "More haste . . ."	89
II. The Harz Mountains	93
God's Houses	99
A Nursery Classic	107

PAGE

Old Brighton 112

Father and Son 125

Autumn Fruit 129

Two More Coincidences 137

The Second Kipper 142

'Poor Dick' 147

A Model Collector 152

Second Thoughts and Third 156

Murders and Motives 161

The Inverse Ratio 166

Sequels 169

Humorous Verse 176

The Fall 187

Letters to Old Friends:

I. The Horse 193

II. The Cow 197

III. The Duck 199

IV. The Cat 200

V. The Pig 203

VI. The Rabbit 207

VII. The Dog 210

A FRONDED ISLE

A FRONDED ISLE

JAMAICA, I can say with feeling, is truly an island of the blest for those who would escape from the English winter, or who wish to be quickly restored to health; but, unless one has a very solicitous and knowledgeable friend at court, Jamaica is high among those countries which one should not visit for the first time until one has been there before. What I mean by this absurdly Hibernian statement is that knowledge where to go and where not to go, where to stay and where not to stay, is essential.

I do not think that I wasted much of the fortnight that I spent there early in 1927, but I certainly wasted some. If I had again to sojourn there I should, for instance, use Kingston merely as a port of arrival and departure, and on disembarking instantly go farther afield. I should arrange to be more on the mountain heights; more in the enchanted, lucid-green waters of the

Doctor's Cave; and to have more time to bask in the tropical sun, which can always be counted upon to conquer any early morning clouds, just as the sea breeze of the afternoon can always be counted upon to refresh the declining day.

* * *

If Kingston was a disappointment, that is less Kingston's fault than the fault of myself remembering too well certain books about it and forgetting the earthquake of 1907. For when looking at the Kingston of to-day it is necessary always to have the earthquake in mind. San Francisco, similarly and more recently scourged by Poseidon, already gives little sign of that dolorous experience, its new buildings scraping the sky as though no lessons were to be learned; whereas Kingston's rebuilding, although it suggests preparedness, has been very cursory, and the place still bears the marks, after twenty years, of being wounded to the quick. There is, however, no real comparison, for San Francisco is the city of a practical, materialistic, unresting people, whereas Kingston and the whole of Jamaica belong to happy-go-lucky dreamers drugged by the sun. The to-morrow to which America seems to be looking forward, often to the neglect of to-day, hardly occupies the Jamaican mind at all. Sufficient for the moment are the warmth and pleasantness thereof. There is even a

native proverb: 'To-day fo' me; to-morrow fo' you.'

* * *

From Kingston's winding harbour, as you approach from Port Royal, the city is almost invisible, so flat is it, with such low buildings. You see the wharves and a steamer or two, and, beyond, a few roofs among greenery. Rising above all, is a shallow dome which I discovered to be that of the new Roman Catholic Cathedral. There is almost nothing to indicate that here is a busy growing capital.

Once ashore and among the streets, which now become surprisingly lengthy, the chief impression that Kingston conveys to the observer is an untidy incompleteness. The buildings, both here and elsewhere in the island, except at Spanish Town, suggest impermanence; and that most defacing of all modern inventions—and not only defacing but contributory to negligence—galvanized-iron roofing, plays far too great a part in them. Kingston seems to have no scheme, no centralization. Like Topsy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (a book often in mind as one moves about the island) it appears not to have been born but to be growing—and growing without discipline. Big business premises and the squalidest hovels conjoin. Never too clean or tidy, it is often unpardonably dirty. Hardly anything that has

solidity meets the eye, and you marvel what it can have been like when the old writers were there: where, for example, William Hickey can have consorted convivially with its English lawyers, intending at first to become one of them, but gradually allowing that purpose to be washed away in claret.

The eighteenth-century Kingston is now inconceivable. You see no house where, on the face of it, claret is likely to be honoured, and the lawyers are mainly not English or Scotch, but native gentlemen of every shade of colour.

If you would find houses of more solidity you must go to Spanish Town (or S. Jago de la Vega, as some of the milestones still have it), the ancient capital, thirteen miles away, where there is a simple church dignified by the name of cathedral, with tombstones of famous West Indian administrators.

* * *

In addition to all the usual concomitants of a capital—public parks, barracks, stores, churches and chapels, bars in great numbers, and a statue of Queen Victoria (less than life size)—Kingston has an interesting Chinese quarter, the astute Chung Fat Kong having been allowed to capture the grocery and provision trade of this island; while every day or so in the season touring steamers, making the round trip from New York

to Panama and back, with Cuba *en route*, land two or three hundred Americans for a few hours in which to examine the town, imbibe mint juleps through artificial straws, bargain for curios, and take photographs of each other with a Jamaican background, as evidence, for home satisfaction, of their West Indian explorations. The season, I may say, is from January to April, and in this season you can be sure of the sun every day from breakfast onwards. But the truant from the grey skies and chill winds and bitter winter rain of England can count on more than the actual benediction of the island's temperature, as, five days before Jamaica is reached, the ship's officers burst into radiant whiteness, and from that moment the heat increases with steady progress until it smites you with an oven-like intensity at Kingston docks. But Jamaica's heat is not treacherous. The pith helmet is seldom seen, and, as I have said, you can depend as surely on a sea breeze every day as on the sun itself. And the nights can be really cool beneath the brightest stars I ever saw, with strange constellations rising in the south and the Great Bear standing on his head.

* * *

Before leaving Kingston for the country district let me say that there is a surprise for the disembarking visitor from which he does not soon recover—and that is the Jamaican penny.

If everything on the island were keyed up to the standard of this magnificent coin, Jamaica would be a fairyland: huts would be palaces, donkeys Derby winners, and bananas apples of the Hesperides. To all appearance the Jamaican penny is an English florin, while the Jamaican halfpenny would make any shilling envious. And the stranger has only just got over his stupefaction at the brilliance and splendour of these humblest of coins when he receives another staggering blow from the Jamaican postage stamp, which has an area in the presence of which the European tongue lolls in dismay.

* * *

On exchanging Kingston for the country, one soon realizes that the colour of Jamaica is red. Green, of course, prevails—the green patches of the mountains, the green covering of the hills, the green of the great leaves of the bananas, the green of palms and ferns and grass. And yet it is red that remains on the retina: the red of the hibiscus, the red of the poinsettia, the red of the Flame of the Forest, the red and purple red of the bougainvillea, and, by no means least, the red of the clothes: the old women's handkerchief turbans, the young women's dresses—so many of them crude crimsons conflicting with every natural bloom. There seems to be no sense of prismatic harmony in the negro temperament.

The green you take for granted; the red is the surprise; and if I were to be asked what colour came next I should say white: the white of teeth usually smiling, the white of eyes turned lazily upon the passer-by. For every one is looked at in Jamaica, not with the insolent Latin stare, or even inquisitively, but with mild and engaging and genial curiosity; and the spectacle of the passer-by is, next to gossip, the island's principal amusement, for you see no games. There could not well be games where there are no flat meadows or prepared grounds—and these exist only in the bigger towns—while no one seems to bathe but visitors.

* * *

Cricket, which is played in the larger towns, I watched whenever I had the chance; but it had best be avoided by the impatient, for it is more deliberate than in England and more frequently interrupted either for discussions or for a round of iced water. Whether or not the wicket-keeper is always captain (as he would be in the ideal game) I cannot say; but in the one important match that I saw, he was, and in my two Saturday afternoon wayside matches he was continually holding up play in order to confer with his colleagues. Each new bowler is entitled to a conference too. Considering that Jamaica is a tropical country and most of its

inhabitants look as though born tired, and all are disposed to friendly talk, the leisure and loquacity of the game are not surprising. But when it comes to the actual play, the Jamaicans are, in spite of natural indolence and the raging sun, as keen as possible.

* * *

Just as in India, so in Jamaica, there is always a dark figure walking in the road. No matter how remote from a settlement or how high in the mountains, the next bend will bring into view a dark figure walking. The Jamaicans do not walk with the erect dignity of the Indians—they straggle with a careless gait—but there is a kinship. These solitary wayfarers, whose huts may be somewhere quite near, or who may be on a long journey, are always carrying something—the men chiefly in their hands; the women, always more heavily laden than the men, on their heads; and never do their feet seem to have any spring. Whether there is a real dejection in their hearts, or that impression is falsely conveyed, I cannot of course say; but to pass them on their weary way is not an exhilarating experience. One longs to give one and all a lift.

The men often dangle a large knife, and, but for the friendliness and gentleness of their demeanour and their listless indifference, might cause a tremor in the nervous; but one feels in Jamaica

that no one wants to hurt any one; the knives are solely to cut banana stems or sugar cane. As for the head-loads of the women, they vary from those of the little school children, who bear their slates and books in this way, to the great bundles of firewood with which the housewives come back from the woods or seashore. Huge bunches of bananas, or a faggot of sugar canes, are common burdens. Old petrol tins filled with water are also a very common sight, leading to conjecture as to what vessel was used before motoring came in. Native-made pottery is very rare, and you never see a water-jug, as in the East, although the fruit carried on the head is packed into circular baskets which the country people themselves make.

But handicrafts are not much practised; the crops demand all the energies; and this may be another reason for the absence of games among the country people, the relaxation of the women being to talk in clusters and that of the men to lean or recline in attitudes of the greatest attainable ease. As you pass the incredibly tiny, dirty, and uncivilized shacks in which they live, you are struck by the curves and loops in which the male human form can arrange itself for blissful indolence. How families can find in these minute hovels any decent accommodation is a mystery which I had neither wish nor opportun-

ity to probe. Long ago though he lived, Uncle Tom certainly was not worse cabined. So far as day is concerned the confinement is not serious, for except in the rains the people can always be out of doors. But at night . . .?

I don't want to convey the impression that Jamaica is a sad country. Far from it. In the towns and villages there is much animation and mirth; but the curse of Canaan one cannot forget. The children, however, are always cheerful and full of fun.

The earth first laughed when the children came.

Poor little black things, what, I constantly wondered, will be their lot? No matter how the instructors in all these numerous schools may impart knowledge, most of them, I used to think, are destined to carry more things on their heads than in them. Ambition is not a flourishing plant in this soil.

* * *

The Jamaican guide-books of indigenous growth must be shaken before taken, for the authors' temptation to make the most of their beautiful island is one that is rarely resisted, and I have a grudge against one of them who had assured me in cold print that at Hope Gardens near Kingston I should find humming-birds in profusion. Now, to see humming-birds alive

has been all my life a commanding desire. To see them dead, in glass cases, as you do at the Natural History Museum, is thrilling; but alive, jewel-like in the tropical air . . .! Whatever else I might have to miss in Jamaica, I would not, I decided on the boat, miss Hope Gardens.

But I saw no humming-birds there, and I had even given up any idea of finding them anywhere, when Chance, so often man's best friend, established me for a day or so in a small house set in the shade of an acacia tree in full flower. The veranda was in two stories, the upper one, with the white blossoms of the acacia spreading into it, being mine. Beyond the acacia was the sea, into which the sun set with extraordinary suddenness.

Well, each evening, for an hour just before the momentary dusk, this tree was the feeding place of humming-birds; and no one can ever have seen them under more perfect conditions, for they were untroubled by the adjacency of their observers. Both the little ones and the long-tailed came to sup—or rather to sip, for their method of eating is to extract the nectar from each bloom in turn with their long bills, quiveringly poised the while. They have, I believe, the ordinary number of wings, but such is the fierceness of their agitation that these are uncountable. It is the beating of them

that causes the humming. When silent upon a twig, as they often are between the courses of the meal, these little birds are exactly like king-fishers seen through the wrong end of a telescope.

* * *

Although the acacia tree was the resort of the humming-birds only in the afternoon, it was not during the rest of the day without interest, for certain insect-eating birds made it their restaurant too, while lizards were constant visitors, either crawling slowly along the branches, darting like thought, or becoming motionless and stealthily incorporating themselves with the bark: sheer Bond Street paper weights. Since watching lizards is a by-product of hot-country travel which never tires, I found the tree inexhaustible.

You find lizards all over Jamaica, but I saw no big ones; nor indeed any wild four-footed animal at all except a mongoose now and then—and the mongoose is merely a visitor, like myself, but without the same opportunity of getting away. This creature was imported from India some few years ago, to deal with the rat pest. From India also come the grave and dignified cattle which you find in greatest numbers in the Montpelier district between Montego Bay and Mandeville. And there are various settlements of coolies from Bengal who make you rub your eyes and wonder

in what country you can be, as you see them advancing along the road exactly as in Calcutta.

* * *

I was less fortunate in the equally important matter of fireflies than with the humming-birds. One of the official guide-books had promised me fourteen varieties, but during night after night of investigation I found not one, nor could anybody tell me where to go to do so. In fact the coolness of Jamaicans towards these magical, these incredible, creatures gave me a shock. To be so excited about the crude and even vulgar banana and say never a word about their fireflies (fourteen varieties) was a kind of treachery to the finer, rarer element. A plethora of fat and very filling crescent-shaped yellow fruits must apparently result, once the planter has established his trees—unless, of course, the dreaded banana disease intervenes; that bananas should multiply is nothing; but to possess fourteen varieties of firefly and be unable to point to one of them strikes me as a defect in pride indeed. It looks almost as though commercial interests came first.

Not only could no one tell me where to go—and the inquiries were made of representative persons high and low—but some that I asked said definitely that February was not the season. 'You should be here in July,' they said. The inexactitude of these replies is typical of the Ja-

maican, whose nature it is to be smilingly vague and irresponsible. Trouble about details no doubt must be taken by some one—or such is the popular belief—but not by him. The consequence was that I had to find fireflies unaided, and this I did, in a garden by the sea at Montego Bay, close to the Doctor's Cave, where the velvet night was excitingly enriched by their unexpected scintillatings. This unexpectedness is a great part of their charm, for you never can correctly anticipate where the next spark will be.

* * *

The humming-birds were flying visitors indeed; whereas for a week at Port Antonio we had the constant companionship of a number of Tinkling Grackles, a Jamaican blackbird who reminds you of the Indian mynah on the one hand and the English jackdaw on the other. He has the mynah's sleek hue and something of his flute-like note; he has the jackdaw's curiosity, fearlessness, and greed. The dining-room of the hotel at Port Antonio consists of a long half-open veranda, with the gardens below, and it is here that the grackle reigns, silently flitting from tree to table and table to tree. If you do not feed him of your own volition (but of course you do) you feed him in response to his commands, uttered with the preciseness of a ship's bell—and almost with the same authority.

The grackle you see and hear everywhere in Jamaica, and also the pied loggerhead, while the local nightingale is common too, but the dominating bird of the island is the John Crow, the great black scavenger ceaselessly hovering over town and country, planing up and down against the wind, with eyes never closed. These official vigilantes are terrifying, with their vast wings and crimson beaks; and they have all the insolence of the pampered bureaucrat.

* * *

Next to the John Crows the biggest birds I saw in Jamaica were the blue herons and white herons on the Rio Grande, as we descended the stream on a bamboo raft. This very deliberate and insipid performance is described in the language of hotel porters as 'shooting the rapids', but let no one expect either speed or peril. Comfort and rapid-shooting should, perhaps, never be allied; none the less, let me advise intending adventurers to take with them a cushion of their own. The pilot who commanded our craft did his best towards a thrill by breaking one of his two poles and losing the other, but we came none the less with ignominious safety into port. Although the river was high, most of the rapids needed an accelerating push.

But even if the sport was poor the voyage was all the way interesting, for the scenery is magnifi-

cent, mountains on either side with the richest vegetation on their lower slopes, raft builders working at the water edge, labourers stepping on stones from one plantation to another, women washing clothes and exchanging greetings with our captain, the herons, white and blue, flying on ahead and awaiting us round the next bend; while the possibility of a really exciting rapid being yet to come was never wholly absent from the hopeful breast.

* * *

But for a masterful and informative chauffeur from Port Antonio I should have been lost. Not only was he a most capable driver, but he was interested in the world about him, which is more than can be said of most of his calling. He knew where the best views were to be obtained, and made no trouble about steering his car to immense heights over loose rubble and even mere cart tracks to gain them—although the car was his own; he was continually watchful for new flowers, and even climbed barbed-wire fences to fetch them—the Black-Eyed Susan's berries, Job's Tears, the Sensitive Plant, and so forth; he knew the names of birds; he recounted old legends, and all in his soft languorous drawl. I did not ask him as to his mixed blood, but I should guess that he had Spanish forbears. (Not a little of the interest of a visit to Jamaica lies in speculations as to ancestry.)

The penalty for stealing a coco-nut is, I was told, nine months' imprisonment, but no fear of reprisals deterred this enthusiast from his practical expositions. He returned from his raids with specimens of every fruit—not forgetting the imported Tahiti apple, whose hue, in its native home, must have been a constant delight to Gauguin, the vermilionaire. He showed us coco-nuts being husked on an upturned ploughshare, and the copra being dried; he cut up sugar cane and laughed when, finding it tasteless, I confessed to another illusion lost. He took us to Moore Town, the headquarters of the Maroons, the descendants of a rebellious section of Africans who broke away from their Spanish masters and for centuries were a menace to the peace of the island. These people, no longer hostile to any one, have an independence and ways and customs of their own, much as those incorrigible foreigners in our own midst, the gipsies.

* * *

But for the chauffeur, I should never have seen Rose Hall, the decayed eighteenth-century mansion with a sinister history, that stands on a hillside between Falmouth and Montego Bay, looking across a sugar factory's chimneys to the soft Caribbean ripples. Jamaica has little that is ancient to show, and, leaving aside an occasional structure destroyed by fire, few ruins. Now

and then you pass an old Spanish sugar works overgrown by bindweed, with bushes springing from its solid stone walls, so different from the neighbouring huts of wood and iron, and the arches of its crumbling aqueduct a reminder of Latin antiquity; but such remains are rare, and nothing that is erected now will endure in the same way. But Rose Hall, which was built when many of the occupants of the vaults in the cathedral at Spanish Town, beneath those sombre black stones, were flourishing, is a ruin worthy of attention, especially by English visitors. It is now but a husk. Its walls stand, but within it is desolate and rotten. There is a fine staircase with beautiful balusters and rail; there are one or two polished floors; all else is gone, except the brass locks and hinges to some of the doors.

An aged negress, with one tooth occasionally glinting in her face of wrinkled ebony, acted as guide, and the history of the house lost nothing in her recital. According to the guide-books the presiding evil genius of the place was a Mrs. Palmer, who, after having married three times and three times suspiciously reached widowhood, was assassinated by one of her slaves goaded to fury. The venerable narrator made the marriages and concomitant murders five, and the murderer the fifth husband, and showed us the actual bloodstains left by the body of Mrs.

Palmer as her avenging lord dragged it across the bedroom floors. She displayed also the dungeon where this autocratic sugar-planter flung recalcitrant slaves, one of whom was eventually to retaliate with such finality.

It is a melancholy and fated spot, with the garden all a waste and nothing cared for, but I was glad to see it even in its desertion and decay, for upon the débris may be constructed a better or more vivid idea of the abundance of the old days than any book can supply.

* * *

Among the many strange and exotic trees pointed out by the chauffeur, the noblest is the cotton tree, which grows to a great age and a great height, throwing out its branches at right angles with all the assurance and self-reliance of the English oak. In maturity these trees are models of luxuriance; in decline their massive convoluted trunks, with huge fissures and buttresses, the colour of elephant hide, often, in the distance, resemble the crumbling walls of a castle of romance. The best cotton trees that I saw grew near the sea between Savanna-la-Mar and Black River, but the most famous is that revered giant on the road from Kingston to Spanish Town which is associated with *Tom Cringle's Log*, and is said to be haunted by the ghosts of malefactors hanged on its boughs.

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Tom Cringle's Log, by Michael Scott, may not be much read to-day, but few modern books can equal it in high spirits, and its pictures of Jamaican plantation life before Clarkson and Wilberforce, and of naval life before steam power came in, are equally vivacious. Appearing serially in *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1832–3, and long after the author had left Kingston for Glasgow, it was the first introduction of the British West Indies to thousands of English readers, although 'Monk' Lewis, himself a Jamaican planter, had, with a less light heart and sedater pen, done his best in that direction.

* * *

'Cotton-tree nebber so big but little axe cut him' is one of the Jamaican proverbs which I found in a torn paper-covered pamphlet on the island. All the proverbs there cited, which are no doubt centuries old, are marked by the cautiousness and even the fatalism of a poor race, without ambition or, indeed, much hope, who live very near the earth. Some of them have a disquieting, sardonic humour. I quote a few: 'Hab money, hab friend'; 'Habee habee no wantee, wanty wanty no habee'; 'Man help thief to-day; nodder time him help watchman'; 'Parson christen him own piccaninny first'; 'When berrin day at yo' door, you no pick and choose gravedigger'; 'When fowl drink water

him lift up head and say "'Tank God! Tank God!" but man drink water and don't say nuffin'; 'Big blanket make man sleep late'; 'When man say him no mind, den him mind'.

Some of the most picturesque of these sayings deal with animals, such as 'Cockroach eber so drunk, him no walk near fowl-house'; 'When cockroach give party, him no ask fowl'; 'When fish come out of sea and tell you alligator hab fever, believe him'; 'When hog dead, him no care for hot water'; 'When puss hab money, him buy cheese'; 'Hog run for him life, dog run for him character'; 'Neber make goat trustee for breadfruit tree'; 'Spider and fly can't make bargain.' Finally, there is this gem of grim fantasy: 'Man neber so hearty, dead watch him'.

* * *

Of the domestic animals which play such a prominent part in negro folklore, the fowl is, in Jamaica, the commonest. Cows are very numerous, but chiefly the imported Indian breeds. A pure-bred dog I never saw, not many mongrels and fewer cats; but black pigs of surprising liveliness scamper all over the place, and goats and kids browse on the banks. The country carts, with wheels almost always converging, are drawn by mules, often three abreast; donkeys carry the loads of those who can afford to keep them, while horses are reserved for over-

seers, who canter along very conscious of their rank. I should have liked to see a race meeting, but there was no fixture during my visit; nor did I find any festival where holiday crowds gather. My impressions of the islanders in their best clothes and at their happiest are confined therefore to Saturdays and Sundays—Saturday, or market day, and Sunday, the Day of Rest. For five days of the week one may be concerned by the slovenliness and even dirtiness of the attire of the rural population, and their detachment, if not actual melancholy. But on these other two days their whole life seems to brighten. Particularly is Saturday merry and cheerful. It is then that you see Jamaica's colouring at its richest, for the women and girls burgeon in their brightest raiment, with the hues of magenta and scarlet contending, and chatter gaily on their way to whatever mart they frequent, each with her load of fruit or vegetables. The markets are a scene of activity and gossip till dark. On Sundays the best clothes come out again, but that day is more demure.

* * *

Jamaica is known as the Isle of Springs, but I doubt if visitors ever expect quite so much running water as they will see. Not only are there the great rivers, but small streams, which have to be forded, frequently cross the roads.

For the most part these rivers reach the sea in an orderly manner, but Dunn's River, near St. Ann's Bay (the Sevilla Nueva of the Spaniards), is one exception, tumbling actually into the waves, so that the bather can vary salt spray with fresh; while Roaring River, not far off it (these being two of the Ochos Rios from which a little town on the south coast is named), has one of the finest waterfalls that I ever saw; not, of course, overwhelming like Niagara, but, broken by its rocks, quite as urgent and glistening and deafening as need be, and having the loveliest tropical setting for its turmoil and joy.

* * *

The Spanish names that I have just cited are among the few heritages from the island's original captors that have been retained. Most of the names now in use are those given by the English; and how poor the exchange! 'I must learn Spanish for that sweet name's sake,' exclaimed the lover in Browning's poem—and a glance at an early map of Jamaica enrols us of his company. But not a map of the present time! The three divisions of the island to-day are Cornwall, Middlesex and Surrey; and the home-sick Briton can comfort himself with a Manchester, a Falmouth, a Sheerness, an Ipswich, a Thetford and a Bath. What would that bold Spanish sailor who landed in Xaymaca

on 3rd May, 1494, and at once claimed it for his royal master, say to that? He—Columbus—called it San Jago, after the patron saint of his country, and gradually every bay and promontory and settlement acquired soft and soothing syllables from the language of the Don, while the beautiful word Hispaniola was coined to cover Haiti. And now we find—what? Hanover, Balaclava, Williamsfield and Spanish Town!

* * *

Generalizing dangerously from few particulars, I would say that it never rains in Jamaica; it only pours. Of the true wet months I know nothing, but I can say from my own observation that in the tourist season the rain behaves as it should; that is to say, it falls vertically and rhythmically, usually at night or in the early morning, and even though at breakfast the skies are overcast, they will soon gloriously clear.

* * *

Breakfast! All meals in Jamaica can be events, especially to those who like strange fruit and strange fish, but none are so good as her breakfasts, where a bowl of grape-fruit, oranges, tangerines, pawpaws, custard apples, star apples, pineapple, and of course bananas, is always waiting on the table, to occupy you while the cook is busy with more elaborate dishes. Before eating anything, you drink a glass of orange juice.

With the pawpaw, a kind of firmer melon which does not travel to England, you take a little squeeze of lime; and why we at home never see limes, but must for ever flavour (and usually impair) our food with lemon juice, I cannot imagine. The pawpaw I had eaten in India, but the custard apples were new, and also the star apples. The custard apple is accurately named, but the star apple is more like the famous giant gooseberry, very slithery and grossly over-pipped. From it and other ingredients is made a confection dear to the Jamaican palate called 'matrimony'. Another local delicacy which I found very good is sour-sop sherbet. I was too early for the mango, which flourishes in July and is, I am told, well worth defiance of the heat at that time. Mr. Eden Phillpotts, the most amicable and tolerant of men, flies into passions of rage when it is merely hinted that the mangosteen excels the mango in flavour; and it was not a little with the wish to understand these strange paroxysms that I embarked upon the Jamaican voyage at all. But, alas! I was too soon. The test is yet to be.

Other strange breakfast food includes such grilled fish as the amber jack, the grouper, the snapper, the silk fish: all distant relatives of the mackerel but larger and less rich. Guava jelly and Blue Mountain coffee play their not incon-

siderable part in this excellent meal. Jamaican ham, perhaps because of the abundance of sugar with which to cure it (and sugar helps every dish that can be cooked), is exceedingly good.

The new vegetables that one finds in Jamaica include the breadfruit, the yam, the sweet potato, and the ackee, which, when prepared, has something of the look and consistency of scrambled eggs, but is smoother and simpler and in its natural state adds to the island's prevailing tint, as it hangs in scarlet glory on the trees. There are also okra and pumpkin and cho-cho, the Jamaican vegetable marrow, all of which you find again, in their second time on earth, in the little dishes of sweet pickles and Jamaica chutney. And then there are the mysterious ingredients, highly seasoned, of the famous national dish, Pepperpot, a thick dark green soup burning with inner fires, which is ladled from a vessel that may have been simmering for a century, never emptied and constantly replenished all that time. I tasted of pepperpot but once, and then, as a resident and gourmet contemptuously phrased it, 'only in a hotel'. For the true sapor, the ultimate caloric, you must go to a native kitchen where leisure and piety reign.

* * *

Shutting my eyes and recalling Jamaica

through the closed lids, I see with vividness the varying light and shade—the mottled green and indigo—of the slopes of the Blue Mountains and the translucent depths of the Caribbean Sea at the Doctor's Cave. With more vividness I see, rising high amid the coco-nut palms, which in their turn are high above the bananas, the rich scarlet of the Flame of the Forest. With most vividness I see the delicate hibiscus blooms at the side of the road, each with its exquisite tassel. Such are the principal visual effects that reverie evokes; while the sensory being is again conscious of the cordial trustworthy sun, not as in Europe an orb of capricious beneficence, but burning with a steady radiant heartiness every day. It is the sun that first of all will call me to Jamaica again.

* * *

I know not, wrote the good grey Whittier in one of his choicest lyrical moments—

> I know not where His islands lift
> Their fronded palms in air.

These lines were in my mind almost constantly while I was in Jamaica, and I felt that, for once, I had knowledge beyond that of a poet, for, as regards at least one of those islands, I did know and shall never forget.

THE REAL PAINTERS

IT was a surprise on the wet October day when I visited, for the first time, the Field of Waterloo to find so many other sightseers there. I had thought that interest in the new war had ejected that in the old: that tourists in Belgium now concentrated on the areas devastated in 1914–18, to the exclusion of whatever trifling event occurred on adjacent soil a century before. But I was wrong. Waterloo was crowded.

By climbing to the top of the pyramid—so like the coal-mine slag dumps all about Mons, and even more like our own Silbury Hill—and circling the lion, one can get a swift comprehensive idea of the scene of the great struggle, which, unlike modern engagements, was all over within the course of a single day, June 18th, 1815. There are now, it is true, many new buildings, villas and cottages, and even, not far off, a golf links; but certain of the historical old ones remain, and these you may visit too: the farm of the Belle Alliance, Napoleon's headquarters, and the

Château of Hougoumont, Wellington's key position, whither the first French attack was directed; the farm of Haie-Sainte, another of Wellington's centres, and so forth. With the story of the battle in mind, the view from the summit of the mound makes all clear, and the figure of the lion, which is cast from the metal of Napoleon's guns captured by the Allies, does nothing to diminish the impression of victory. The rout was indeed complete: here the cannon melted into a symbol of conquest; there, the Emperor in St. Helena, in his living tomb, defeated, disgraced, and removed from the sight of men.

But to come to the real painters. In Brussels I had, as I always do in that city, spent much time in the Picture Gallery, the chief glory of which is, I suppose, the great abundant Peter Paul Rubens, artist, ambassador and *bon vivant*, with the pensive Vandyke on the one side of him and the carnal Jordaens on the other, and congested larder scenes by Snyders in their near vicinity. But my own feet carry me first to the room with the Flemish primitives in it, tarrying longest before the work of Roger of the Field, Gerard David, Hans Memling, and one or two unnamed mâitres, all of whom in the winter of 1926-27 were at Burlington House to rejoice and astonish English home-keepers. It is their simple sincerity, their glowing tints, that I most enjoy.

It is they that I think of, in Belgium, as the real painters; or it was, until I went to Waterloo.

But at Waterloo I began to think of the limner's art in a new way; for, having descended the mound, I entered the famous panorama of the battle, and at once realized what brushes and colours are capable of when theatrically plied. For if ever there was a miracle of pigment it is here, and to those who created this panorama all credit should be given: to those modern mâitres—Messieurs Robiquet, Malespine and Desvarreux, who, working under M. Louis Dumoulin, recreated the tragic and critical scene. Panorama painters are such a negligible lot that not a word can I find about any of these four men in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, but my admiration of them is not thereby diminished. All panoramas are interesting, but none that I have seen equals this, which is made the more vivid by its elucidating signs.

You can tell, by looking up at the ceiling or noting the point at which the built-up realism—wax or wooden figures of dead men and horses, bloodstained grass, lost swords and shakos, cast horseshoes, the actual débris of warfare—ends and what are the actual dimensions of the panorama. The illusory dimensions are illimitable, the landscape melting away into incredible mileage. Such effects as this are, of course, the A B C

of panorama making; but, as I said before, I have never seen them better done, and the actual fighting is convincing, too. The two great protagonists are too small to be recognized without assistance—Napoleon on his white mare, Desirée, and his monocular field-glass in his hand, and Wellington on his favourite charger, a descendant of Eclipse, perhaps repeating to himself the conquering order, 'Every man must stand his ground.' Not yet was the time to utter the command, 'Up, Guards, and at them!'—if, which has been questioned, he really delivered it. Blücher is far more distant, amid the smoke, awaiting his hour to strike. Try as one will, one can get no glimpse among Wellington's personnel of the famous button-maker of Birmingham, whose part in the battle was, on his own authority, so important.

I find that for the invention of the variety of panorama of which this at Waterloo is an example, the credit must go to Germany—to an architect named Breisig—although a Scotchman named Robert Barber also claimed the honour. Barber's story is interesting. Born in 1739, he settled in Edinburgh as a miniature painter—surely the oddest preparation for a maker of panoramas. One day, when sketching on Calton Hill, the atmospheric conditions were such that the view seemed to be enclosed within the walls of a cylinder, and he saw the possibilities of

representing it in this way. He made a model, and took it to London to show to the greatest luminary of his profession, Sir Joshua. Sir Joshua was incredulous, even to the point of promising that if the young man succeeded he would leave his bed at night to inspect the result. Barber, being not only a Scotchman but a Scotchman with a panorama of Edinburgh up his sleeve, persisted, completed the task, and established the result in a house off Leicester Square, where Sir Joshua lived; so that the great man, true to his word, had to come to see it after all—and this he did in his dressing-gown and slippers. It was not, however, publicly exhibited in London until 1788. In 1792 it was followed by a panorama of London, while in 1794 a review of the Fleet at Spithead was shown. All were very profitable, and Barber died a rich man in 1806.

Among recent panoramas that I have seen and marvelled at is that of Scheveningen, in which Mesdag, the banker-painter, had a hand. This also is in a circular room, at the Hague; but the panoramas of my childhood were on the flat and they moved along. A gentleman with a wand stood at the side and told us about them and then they moved along again. O the glorious expectation in which we sat, wondering what would be next! The magic-lantern was exciting, but it was simpler: superior families could even

hire one for themselves; but about the panorama pomp and circumstance gathered.

For the most part we had scenery in foreign lands; but there were special effects too, and I remember the mimic battleships at the bombardment of Alexandria, spitting out real flame and emitting real bangs ('Bravo, *Condor*!'), and the city bursting into flame and smoke. Not even the vaunted cinema has real flame. I remember also that it was during the performance of this panorama (which bore the exalted name of myriorama) that a comic singer occasionally obliged, and, though several crowded decades have passed, three lines of one of his songs still cling tenaciously to a memory that would fain forget them:

> There's been nothing but war
> Since her I first sor.
> O a nice cup o' tea is my——

Well, you know the rest. No? Mother-in-lor, of course. How sad that such rubbish should have the power of digging itself so firmly in!

THE FUN OF THE FAIR

I SAW at the movies recently the film of a German woman without arms knitting, writing, and pouring out tea—all with her toes—and I thought to myself, thought I, that if on my next time on earth I have to be a freak, I would rather be something like that than a Giant, a Fat Woman or a Dwarf. I say 'or a Dwarf', but that the last two distinctions may be combined these eyes can testify; for not long ago I saw in a French fair a lady of astonishing shortness —only just a yard in height—and of totally disproportionate plumpness, who called herself *La Petite Colosse*, and thus reaped in both fields at once. I have vividly before me this little creature's smiling, shrewd, Scotch face—Scotch, for she told me she was born in Glasgow, although in a lifetime spent in foreign booths she had forgotten all her native tongue. She seemed to be serenely happy and very ready with her acquired language, her riposte with some naughty Frenchmen being masterly.

La Petite Colosse brings back to mind that

delightful coloured drawing by Phil May which hangs in the writing-room of the Royal York Hotel at Brighton: one of his best works, depicting an interview between a showman and an insignificant applicant who wishes to be engaged as a giant. 'But,' says the showman, 'you're only five feet six.' 'I know,' says the man, proudly: 'I'm the smallest giant on record.'

Curiously enough, it was at this same Royal York Hotel that I met in the flesh the tallest man I have ever seen for nothing. One Sunday at that haven for escaped Londoners, there strolled into the luncheon-room an incredible figure with his head far too nigh the ceiling. This was the Russian giant then appearing at the London Hippodrome, who had just uncoiled himself from a motor-car, and who gradually became friendly with the guests at neighbouring tables, of whom I was one, even to taking off his finger-ring so that we might pass half-crowns through it. Of frightening height even without his tall hat, he had all the traditional gentleness of giants (excepting always the cannibal in *Jack the Giant Killer*), and his vast pale face had a certain melancholy charm. Those whom the gods construct on such an exaggerated scale usually dying young, this frail Colossus is now probably no more. What a funeral to attend! And the funerals of Fat Women—terrible thought.

Mr. de la Mare in his *Memoirs of a Midget* has dealt faithfully with that variety of female freakishness, but we still await the novel that shall give us the private life of these strange exceptions. It was done sentimentally in a book when I was in the nursery—*A Peep Behind the Scenes*—but I should like a work authentic and naturalistic. Perhaps France has produced something of the kind, for the fair flourishes in France where it languishes with us, and French novelists can say what they want to say; and too often do so.

So much for giants, dwarfs, and *petites colosses*. When it comes to real out-size Fat Women, I recall that one of my earliest excitements was connected with a Fat Woman in a booth at Luton. I was taken with a cousin to see her; and how disconcertingly near she seemed! The cousin she embraced, while thankfulness for my own fortunate ill-favouredness permeated my being. Looking at my youthful kinsman, 'I must give this little darling a kiss,' she said; and I can still feel some of the horror that was mine as I watched him being drawn towards her and enfolded within those amplitudes. Nor did domestic humorists allow him to forget it.

I wonder why the fair which flourishes in France and other foreign countries is so far to seek in England, where we are as simple and as

fond of peep-shows as any other folk. Take as examples London and Paris. For Londoners the only fairs, with roundabouts and booths and swings and coco-nut shies and shooting galleries, must be sought on Hampstead Heath, in Epping Forest, on Epsom Downs, at Pinner, at Barnet and Mitcham—all distant, or at Christmas in the Agricultural Hall and Olympia; whereas each arrondissement of Paris has its regular fête once a year, right in the streets among the traffic, and all over the country there are others continually in progress, so that the professional forains must be numbered by thousands. And not only are there such entertainments as I have mentioned, but side-shows, some of which can be very amusing. There lies before me, for example, a page from a notebook containing a list of names. These are the names: Isidore, Joseph, Louis, Jules, Charlot, Pierre, Nicodéme, and I would venture a small sum of money that no reader of this book could guess what they represented. They are the names of a row of little mechanical pigs which I first saw at the fair at Saint Cloud, and have since encountered again more than once: each on a plank with a ratchet, and each with a string tied to its tail. The competitors grasp these strings; the keeper of the stall rings a starting-bell, and then you give a series of tugs, each one of which should advance the pig along

his plank towards a little door. The skilful manipulator of the first pig to reach home receives a prize, and the fact that the prize is of less value than the entrance-fee matters nothing; you have won. All day and nearly all night these little pigs are being raced against each other.

I found in the same notebook a photograph of myself in the act of aiming with a gun—apparently firing at the photographer. Not a bad idea; but, as it happens, erroneous. As a matter of fact, the photograph was taken without human intervention: through a hole in the target beside the bull's-eye, of such ingenious construction, that when the aim is accurate a released spring ignites something inflammable and puts into action the shutter of a camera. I shall not reveal how many pellets at fifty centimes apiece were expended before the blissful consummation arrived; but the photograph proves that in course of time I achieved victory. It was developed and mounted, all ready for the successful marksman to collect, in about twenty minutes after the fatal shot. I have never heard of an English rifle-range with such an alluring reward of merit; but such is our vanity that it could not fail to be profitable.

I recall also an entertainment—this was in a fête along the north bank of the Seine, near the Eiffel Tower—called Twenty Minutes in Hell, displaying a traditional marionette devil with

horns and pitchfork standing over a flaming pit, into which he tossed various enemies of society as they were led in for judgment: good satirical butts, such as the short-weight coal-merchant, the sugar-sanding grocer, the water-diluting milkman. Excellent food for the housewife's laughter.

TEACHING THE GRANDMOTHER

WHAT, asks the poet, does he know of England who only England knows? A new French cookery book whose pages I have been turning over supplies the answer: Very little. For example, how many poor benighted Englishmen or Englishwomen who only England know have the slightest idea as to how 'Le Pudding de Rumpsteak,' an essentially English dish, would be prepared if the French had their way, or even as to how the French author of this cookery book thinks it is prepared? We all like it, plain, with kidneys, or with such exotic accessories drawn from the elements of air and water as larks and oysters; but I should be very much surprised to learn that the second ingredient insisted upon by our lively neighbour, the compiler of this work, ever occupied that position in an English kitchen, or indeed was contemplated as an ingredient in any English kitchen at all.

But the French know better, or, at any rate, think they do, and here is the whole recipe drawn

up for our benefit—for the delectation of Perfidious Albion—by a magnanimous son of Gaul, and translated as well as I can manage it. One hundred grammes, I should say, by way of preface, equal 35·27 ounces.

LE PUDDING DE RUMPSTEAK

This is one of the best English dishes. It consists of a crust of suet containing rumpsteak strongly sprinkled with brandy. As the crust hermetically seals it all in, the meat is saturated with the flavour of the water-of-life. The result is absolutely remarkable.

	Grammes.
Rumpsteak	500
Fine Champagne	100
Butter	30
Flour	250
Beef Fat	150
Warm Water	100
One Egg.	

Prepare the paste. To do this, mix the flour, the egg, a little salt, and enough warm water to make a paste that is easily kneaded. Roll this out, and add 50 grammes of the fat grated or cut up very small. Fold in three. Wait ten minutes. Roll it again, and add 50 more grammes of fat. Fold in three. Wait ten minutes. Begin again, and add the rest of the fat.

Finally roll out the paste so that it is one centimetre thick all over.

Take a bowl. Cut a circle out of the paste with the rim of the bowl. Put it aside, and with the rest of the paste line the inside of the bowl. Leave a rim of paste hanging over the edge.

Then stir the rumpsteak, cut into little lumps, into the

butter, salt it and pepper it. Place it in the bowl. Add the brandy. Cover it up with the circle of paste that you cut with the rim of the bowl, and see that its edges are fixed to those of the paste lining the bowl.

The meat is thus in a vessel that is completely closed. Wrap a napkin round the bowl with the four corners knotted on the top, and plunge the whole affair in a casserole of boiling water. Leave it to cook for three-quarters of an hour.

Serve it in the bowl. Cut the top crust and give to each guest some of the meat and some of the paste.

There! In a people who one sometimes suspects are not so fond of us as they might be, I call that very handsome. English dishes are not much to their taste, and yet here is a whole page given to telling us how to make better one of our most essentially national dishes. I pass over the circumstance that the extra ingredient —the one that no English cook had ever thought of—is a product of France which can be obtained by us only by import; because I am certain that that is pure chance, although I cannot believe that France will be offended if, as the result of my efforts, she sells more brandy than heretofore.

I have not yet tried a rumpsteak pudding with eau-de-vie, but hope to do so. It sounds very good, although the absence of kidneys is rather distressing, and I am surprised that no provision is made by the author for an extra supply of juice. The defect of beefsteak and kidney puddings in most English homes to-day,

and in all English restaurants, is the drought that too soon sets in and is not remedied.

One more of the Frenchman's recipes I quote, but there are fewer surprises here. Indeed there may be none:

LE PLUM PUDDING

	Grammes.
Beef Kidney Fat	100
Flour	500
Raisins of Corinth	50
Raisins of Smyrna	50
Milk	200
Salt	10
Ginger	10
Brown Sugar	100
Rum	200
Whisky	100
Two Apples.	
Two Eggs.	

Cut up the kidney fat, mince the apples, pulverize the ginger, and mix these and all the other ingredients very carefully together. Wrap up the mixture in a linen cloth, bind it with string, and put it in a basin. Hang this basin in a vessel of boiling water, and let it cook for an hour and a half.

Strain off the water, set the pudding in its cloth on a plate, and on it put a board with weights up to 2 kilogrammes (4½ lb.).

Leave it like that till the next day. Then release the pudding from its wrappings and bonds, sprinkle it with rum, and serve in flames.

So far the Frenchman, who presumes considerable knowledge on his reader's part. There

is, you see, no mention of re-heating the pudding before it is dished up; but, of course, he means that. Nor does he say anything about laying down this delicacy as though it were a vintage wine. He prepares to-day and eats to-morrow, whereas English housewives often keep puddings for months, deeming them the richer and the more delicious for that reason. The Frenchman also misses a great chance of national profit, for he recommends only the rum of my fronded isle and the whisky of Scotland. Has he never heard of brandy butter? If not, let me, in gratitude for what he has told me, acquaint him with its virtues. However good a plum pudding may be without brandy butter, it is better with it. And, as I mentioned above, it is from France that our brandy comes.

Vive la France! Vive l'Angleterre!

LITTLE JOURNEYS

I. GOODWOOD

AGAIN, at Goodwood, I marvelled at the disregard in which our old nobility are able to hold the art and literature of their own day, for everything you see dates from the past; nothing apparently having been added since Victoria ceased to reign. It is true that living painters have dealt with the present Duke and with his daughter, the Duchess of Northumberland; but their portraits are in negligible positions. In the places of honour are kings and other ancestors, from Stuart times downwards.

The massive and amiable lady who displays the treasures leads you first through the long drawing-room to the right, where hang mixed pictures, some English, many Dutch, and a few Italian, including some Canalettos. Save for two Van der Heydens, the Dutch are not very good, although a Rembrandt portrait should not be missed. In the little circular card-room, at the foot of one of the twin turrets

with the copper lids, we find not only English, but absolutely local, talent, in two landscapes by George Smith, of Chichester, but they are subjects drawn from the classics and Claude, and anything but Sussex. This Smith, one of three painting brothers, who were all protégés of the third Duke, was known fearsomely on the Continent as 'The British Gessner'.

In the long ballroom we come to Charles the First, by Vandyke, and beside him, on a table, his crown (very like Chichester Cross), and, as a pendant, his Queen. On the far wall is a familiar group of his children with a huge hound. Also here are Charles II and (surely very much out of place!) Nelly Gwynn, both by Sir Peter Lely. It is not until we reach the dining-room that we come to The Other Lady—in two portraits, one by Lely and one by Kneller: the astute and commanding 'Madam Carwell', who was the mother of the first of the second line of Dukes of Richmond—Louise Renée de Keroualle.

A French girl of distinguished Breton lineage, Louise became known to Charles II on her visit to England as Maid of Honour to his sister, the Duchess of Orleans. That was in 1670, when she was twenty-one and the Merry Monarch was forty and was becoming not a little bored with Lady Castlemaine, although

Nelly Gwynn was still in high favour. It was not until after the Duchess of Orleans' death in 1671 that Louise settled in England and took her place as a Royal mistress. Nelly never lost the King's regard, even though she often tried him very high, and even though her hostility to Madam Carwell (as the English pronounced Keroualle) sometimes took desperate courses; but the Frenchwoman prevailed, and, as Duchess of Portsmouth, wielded great power. Louise was a schemer, Nelly only a wild and adorable child of nature; and, at Court, schemers usually win, especially if a French King is behind them.

Louise de Keroualle's son, the first Duke of Richmond, was born in 1672; she lived on, in her own country, to 1734, long after Charles II was dust, and into the reign of the second George The first Duke of Richmond, who acquired Goodwood in 1720, died there in 1723; his remains are in Chichester Cathedral. The second Duke, born in 1701, was a worthier man, a naturalist, an antiquary and friend of learning: 'noble', said one who knew him, 'in his acting, talking, feeling', and the father of, among others, Lady Sarah Lennox, who, in her turn, was the mother of Charles James Napier and William Napier. The second Duke died in 1750, and also lies in Chichester Cathedral.

The third Duke, born in 1735, took a more important part in his country's affairs, and it was while replying to his motion for the withdrawal of our troops from America that the Earl of Chatham was seized with his fatal illness. Horace Walpole described him as 'intrepid and tender, inflexible and humane beyond example'. He died in 1796, and was buried in Chichester Cathedral. Such was his love of art that he made a collection of casts from the antique, that all might see and study them free, in a building in his Whitehall garden. The fourth Duke, a nephew of the third, was born in 1764. The fifth Duke, also a soldier, added Gordon to the Richmond title, on the death of his uncle, the fifth Duke of Gordon. Devoted to racing, he gave the Goodwood race-course its prestige, while he twice won the Oaks.

The most beautiful thing at Goodwood is a picture of the Thames from the windows of the ancient town residence of the family, Richmond House, which stood where Richmond House Terrace now stands. Antonio Canaletto, of whom it is customary to think as a painter of Venice, and of Venice only, was in England in the middle of the eighteenth century, and it was then that this lovely canvas blossomed. I have seen some of his other work done in this country, both drawings and

paintings, but nothing to equal the bland and lucid charm of this picture of the river, its boats, its barges, its buildings, and St. Paul's rising serenely white over all.

That is Goodwood's most beautiful possession. Its most interesting, to me, is a chair which belonged to Napoleon, of polished walnut, with a solid concave back. French visitors, I was told, all long to sit in it. A Napoleonic relic has some melancholy fitness here, for was it not a Duchess of Richmond and Gordon who gave the famous ball on the night before Waterloo?—'There was a scene of revelry' —while her husband, the fourth Duke, was a member of Wellington's staff, and her son, the fifth, was also his friend. In the hall are banners from that battle, and in one of the glass cases in the little museum are two of Wellington's handkerchiefs—trifling ladylike affairs for such an organ. Here also is a glove worn by Queen Victoria at her Coronation, and the first Duke of Richmond's first shirt and first shoes; but the shirt of Charles I, in its own special vitrine, is, I suppose, the clou of the collection.

II. WILTON

Approaching Salisbury by the Andover road, I noticed again how the cathedral spire fluctuates

behind the hills, now dwindling to the tiniest village steeple, now disappearing altogether, and then a few moments later elongating to its own magnificent and almost incredible loftiness. But it is not until one looks from the Corner Sitting-Room at Wilton and sees the spire in the middle of a space cut for it between the trees of the park, that its delicacy is fullest realized.

I have just said something about the Vandykes at Goodwood; but at Wilton there are far more, and one of them another version of the group of Charles the First's children, this time not with a massive hound but attended by two of their father's spaniels. But the Royal bantlings that most interested me there were those (if the description of the picture is true) of Henry VII, painted by the jovial Jan Gossaert, better known as Mabuse, who has given each of them the curved and pouting lips he was so fond of. The biggest and eldest of the brood is the luckless Arthur, very solidly Tudor in girth, who was diplomatically united to Catharine of Aragon at the age of fifteen and died a few months later, leaving both his spouse and his kingly inheritance to the small boy who in this picture has been toying with an apple and looking very unlike the assiduous bridegroom into which he was to develop. In his adult straddling swagger you find him later, carved

and gilded, on the sideboard of the Wilton dining-room.

You see the first Earl of Pembroke of the second creation—William Herbert (1501–70) by Holbein, over the mantelpiece of the library. Aubrey, the Wiltshire antiquary, who lived not so far away, at Broadchalke (later the home of Maurice Hewlett), says that the first Earl could not read or write; but there is an autograph signature in a frame beneath the portrait to give the lie to so foul an aspersion on a nobleman. After a somewhat stormy life of fighting and court intrigue, in which he fell out more than once with his Royal master, he was succeeded by Henry Herbert, the second Earl (1534–1601) who, though he instituted Salisbury races, is best known for bringing Mary Sidney into the family: the Countess of Pembroke—'Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,' of the beautiful epitaph.

It is agreeable, as one walks through these rooms, to think that the soldier-author of the *Arcadia* was often here; for, indeed, that book was largely composed at Wilton and was given to the Countess by the poet, and, after his death, prepared by her under this roof for the press. In a glass case in one of the rooms is a lock of Queen Elizabeth's hair, bestowed by that monarch upon Sir Philip Sidney in 1573, with her 'own faire hand', and received by him 'on

bended knee'. Of the metrical version of the Psalms which Sir Philip and his sister made together here, Sir John Harington said that they would 'outlast Wilton's walls'.

When Ben Jonson used the phrase 'Pembroke's mother', he meant the Countess's elder son, William, the third Earl (1580–1630), to whom, with his brother Philip, as 'the incomparable pair of brethren', the first folio of Shakespeare was dedicated, and who by the majority of critics of Shakespeare's Sonnets is identified with W. H., 'the onlie begetter' of those revealing 'fourteeners'. He is known to have been the lover of Mary Fitton, who, in her turn, has been identified with the 'dark lady'. Whether William Herbert was Shakespeare's W.H. we shall probably never know with certainty; but it is not improbable that Shakespeare himself has been in these rooms. Samuel Daniel was brought to Wilton as the third Earl's tutor, while among other poetical friends of the house, who beyond doubt were visitors here, were Ben Jonson, Raleigh, Dyer, Carew, Brown (who may have written the famous epitaph), Strode, John Donne, and Gabriel Harvey. But perhaps the name, after Shakespeare's, that is most appealing, is that of the spiritual lyrist, pious Master George Herbert, a kinsman of the Pembrokes, who had the living of Bemerton, which on the way from Salisbury we pass.

One of the pleasantest of the many Vandykes is the small version of Philip Herbert, the fourth Earl (1584–1660), younger son of the famous Countess, and named after her beloved brother. In addition to the little Vandykes, there is a full-length, and also the vast group at the end of the Double Cube Room, wherein we find the fourth Earl, his second Countess, and many children. Two figures, a son and a daughter, are in Vandyke's best manner; the rest of the group is perfunctory, and might easily be largely the work of the Court painter's ghosts.

Architecturally, Wilton is grey and square and mainly Tudor (but with additions by 'Iniquity Jones', as the fourth Earl called the illustrious Inigo), with the cloisters of a monastery suppressed by Henry VIII preserved in its midst. Its rooms are noble and spacious, its paintings many and valuable; but, after Honthorst's portrait of Prince Rupert, I find myself recalling with most vividness the lawns and cedars, the distinguished little Palladian bridge over the River Nadder (built by the ninth Earl), the formal garden as seen from the Library, and the spire of Salisbury Cathedral in its glade as seen from the Corner Sitting-Room.

To pilgrims intending to visit Wilton I have a word of counsel. Salisbury naturally being their point of attack, it is there that they would

expect to eat. Nothing easier, for there is an inn every few yards, while pork butchers, ordinary butchers, confectioners, and cafés jostle each other. The greater hotels, being so well known, need no commendation from me, but there is a little hostelry, six hundred years old, a nest of old oak rooms and narrow stairs, where the plate shines, the glass sparkles, the napery gleams, and excellent English food is served. It is very small, knows no French, is very careful of its patrons, and is the only six-hundred-year-old restaurant in which I ever ate that is gained through a modern jeweller's private door. Remember its name—the 'Haunch of Venison.'

III. LONGLEAT

All things come to him who waits—or rather, to him who does not die while waiting—and I have now seen Longleat; but I should not have done so had I listened to two of the smallholders on the Longleat estate, for one told me that nobody was ever admitted to the house at all, without a special permit, and the other that the nearest point to which a motor-car was allowed to approach was two and a half miles distant—and had that been the case I was too late. But both were triflers with the truth; for the house is open to any one twice a week, and you may drive right up to the imposing façade.

This grave and stately house, with its wealth of carved stone, lies in a hollow, as all the big Tudor mansions did, the cult for hilltops not then having set in, while the need for Friday's fish had always to be kept in the builder's mind. It is approached by a straight avenue three-quarters of a mile long, and on the right you have the little Leat, here artificially extended into a sinuous lake, with, on the afternoon of my visit, a very tall and supercilious heron lording it on the far bank. The chill of the rather too stately and formal front is corrected, as you see from the windows, by the cheerfulness of the gardens at the back, with a very comforting orangery to complete the welcome. On all sides spreads the great rolling park.

One is inclined to be testy and even sarcastically democratic when one is refused admittance to historical houses; but, illogically enough, I confess to a feeling of shame when I am taken through rooms that have every right to be private. The informative, wistful little housekeeper, with a cap on her head just as in the old days, did not, however, encourage such shrinking. She continued in her soft, friendly tone to name every portrait of all the myriad Thynnes, and every painter of them, as though it were a part of my daily life too, not balking, in the sumptuous drawing-room where the old Italian masters

hang, even at such an obstacle as Andra Mantegna, and taking Ghirlandaio in her gentle stride. Nor would she hurry. We went everywhere except into the bedrooms, and everywhere was a portrait, not only of the members of the family, but of outsiders, such as Martin Luther, very big and bearded, and below him a miniature of his wife; Sir Walter Raleigh, lofty and self-conscious, fiddling with a pair of compasses; Charles II, dark and debonair; his Royal father as Prince of Wales, the artist who painted him making him the giant that he so conspicuously was not; and in the Red Library, that most attractive of all the rooms, Lord Chancellor Thurlow glowing from Sir Joshua's rich palette.

The Thynnes on Longleat's walls range from William Thynne the Tudor, painted by Holbein, to the present Marquis, painted by Sir William Orpen, and the present Marchioness, painted by Mr. Glyn Philpot. The Tudor William Thynne held various Court offices under Henry VIII, including chief of the kitchen, with control of the Royal banquets, but he is better known to fame as the first editor of Chaucer. It was he who introduced his nephew, afterwards Sir John Thynne and the builder of Longleat, to the King, a first step to his worldly success, which was cemented by his marriage with the heiress of Thomas Heynes of Church Stretton. Long-

leat was built on the site of a suppressed priory, the work lasting from 1567 to 1579, and costing eight thousand pounds—a sum which to-day would have disappeared before the foundations were laid. The house, however, was ready for Queen Elizabeth, whose comptroller Thynne was, to stay there in 1575. Thynne, who died in 1580, seems to have been his own architect, although John Thorpe, to whom so many rich gentlemen of those times decreeing pleasure domes went, has sometimes the credit. The stone terrace and the great staircase were, however, not added until the next century, by Sir John's great-grandson, with Sir Christopher Wren to advise; while the winding water and the new formal gardens were the work of Lancelot Brown, in the eighteenth century. This was the famous 'Capability' Brown, who was called in to make noblemen's grounds look more natural and supply curves in place of hard lines.

The most important Thynne of Longleat was Thomas Thynne, son of Sir James Thynne, who met his untimely death, at the age of thirty-four, at the hands of an assassin in Pall Mall, in 1682, almost exactly where the United Service Club now stands. By a symmetrical arrangement it was on the same spot that the guilty man and his accomplice were hanged not long afterwards. It was this Thomas Thynne, a sympathiser with

Monmouth, who got into 'Absalom and Achitophel' as Issachar. He was painted both by Lely and Kneller. The next noteworthy Longleat Thynne was Sir Thomas (1640–1714), who became first Earl of Weymouth, and whose portrait is by Lely. The next owner was the second Viscount, great-nephew of 'Issachar', of whom there is nothing to say, and the next was Thomas Thynne, third Viscount (1734–67), statesman, gambler, friend of Fox, the butt of John Wilkes and 'Junius', and protégé of George III, who made him Marquis of Bath. There is much of this Thynne in Walpole's Letters and in other gossip of the time. His portrait is by Lawrence. The fourth Marquis was John Alexander Thynne, an authority on the Near East, who died in 1896; the fifth is the very considerate gentleman who allows the public to see his beautiful house free of charge.

I am glad to have seen it at last. And I am the better informed, too, for now, when I write my great work on the Lives of the Nobility, I shall be able to say, from personal observation, that Marquises are addicted to jig-saw puzzles, are not averse from the gramophone, take in *Punch* and the cheaper magazines, and among their favourite table-flowers are gloxinias.

IV. BROMHAM AND THOMAS MOORE

I have lately stood by the graves of two poets, so alike in their resting-places and so different in their work. One, my favourite, lies at Laleham, in Middlesex, beside the Thames; the other at Bromham, in Wiltshire. The one, Matthew Arnold, was fastidious, reserved, ruthlessly self-critical and responsible for his every word; the other, Thomas Moore, was facile, impulsive, and acquiescent to popular appeal.

It is odd that I had never visited Bromham before, because it is only four miles from Devizes, an open and spacious country town that I know well. Devizes is indeed one of the choicest spots on my list, with its contiguity to Salisbury Plain, to the grass hills, to the Grey Wethers and the White Horses; with its marvellous series of canal locks climbing from the plain; and in its midst a perpetual object-lesson as to the wickedness and folly of untruth—for the monument in the great square in front of the Bear Inn (where Sir Thomas Lawrence's father once was host) records the fate of a British Sapphira for all to read and profit by. Peruse the terrifying record:

> On Thursday, the 25th January, 1753, Ruth Pierce, of Potterne, in this county, agreed, with three other women, to buy a sack of wheat in the market, each paying her due proportion towards the same. One of these women, in collecting the

several quotas of money, discovered a deficiency, and demanded of Ruth Pierce the sum which was wanting to make good the amount. Ruth Pierce protested that she had paid her share, and said: ' She wished she might drop down dead if she had not.' She rashly repeated this awful wish, when, to the consternation and terror of the surrounding multitude, she instantly fell down and expired, having the money concealed in her hand.

If anything could, would not that record inspire veracity?

Well, Bromham is four miles from Devizes, just off the main road to 'Sweet Calne in Wiltshire', where other poets have gathered, namely, the youthful Coleridge and the youthful Lamb, and for many years Moore's house was at Sloperton, near by, and there he died, and at Bromham he was buried.

The west window in Bromham church, which a company of Moore's admirers erected in his honour, representing the Last Judgment, is a very poor affair. A better memorial is the Celtic cross in the churchyard, which, however, should have been set up farther from the walls. The best glass is in the beautiful Bayntun or Beauchamp Chapel, the particular glory of the church, a few old lights remaining in one of the south frames. In this lovely building, beneath a rich wooden ceiling, reposes the marble effigy in full armour of Sir Roger Touchet, who died in 1457. The chancel is new, but Moore must often

have watched the light as it graciously irradiated the delicate Bayntun stonework, although he does not seem to have been inspired by it. Nor indeed was he that kind of poet. He had no eyes. His work is either sentimental, on traditional lines, or satirical. It embraces no 'Rugby Chapel'.

That evening I turned again the pages of Moore's Complete Poems in the Oxford edition: complete save for the youthful indiscretions of Mr. Thomas Little, which might easily have been included, so harmless are they and so much more neatly turned than many of the lyrics of his more fluent maturity; and again I was amazed by Moore's success. How could *Lalla Rookh* have rivalled the popularity of Scott and Byron? one asks oneself to-day. But nothing is stranger than the vagaries of taste of the British reading public. As for the *Intercepted Letters* and other lampoons on the Prince Regent, Moore's constant butt, and the politicians and courtiers of the early years of the last century, they are unreadable; partly because they are so intensely topical, and partly because no editor has put back the dropped vowels which it was the mode then to adopt, by way, I suppose, of dodging the law of libel. Even when Moore, in an outburst against the Regent's reluctance to help an old friend, wrote his blistering lines on the death of Sheridan,

the name of the dramatist and orator is spelt Sh-r-d-n. This poem is one of the bard's most admirable and authentic utterances, and shows him to have been a good friend.

The Bromham Celtic cross is a hard and almost hostile monument for so gay and genial a creature, with his warm Irish preferences and eager Irish dislikes. It is certainly disproportionate, and its grey severity seems a very long way removed from the drawing-room patriotism of the *Irish Melodies*. These still have their musical cadences, their wistful love of country; but they are very innutritious and unconvincing to-day after an interim in which we have heard Mangan and Yeats, Synge and Sean O'Casey, and perhaps, above all, the *Songs of the Glens of Antrim*, by Moira O'Neill.

But the first lines of the melodies retain much of their old charm; and perhaps it is as a poet of first lines that Moore will live. 'Go where glory waits thee'; 'Oh, breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade'; 'The harp that once through Tara's halls' (through, not in); 'Rich and rare were the gems she wore'; 'We may roam through the world like a child at a feast'; 'Come, send round the wine and leave points of belief'; 'Believe me, if all those endearing young charms'; 'Oh, blame not the bard, if he fly to the bowers'; 'Tho' dark are our sorrows, to-day we'll forget them'; 'She

is far from the land where her young hero sleeps'; "'Tis the last rose of summer'; 'The minstrel boy to the war is gone' (is, not has); 'The time I've lost in wooing'; 'Oh, had we some bright little isle of our own'; 'Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer'; 'Dear harp of my country, in darkness I found thee.' It is by such lines and the airs that accompany them that Moore lives. Now and then, but very seldom, he gave us a whole idea to remember, as when, anticipating the late Henry Willett, he wrote, in 'The Young May Moon':

> 'Tis never too late for delight, my dear,
> And the best of all ways
> To lengthen our days
> Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear.

Now and then he gave us a sentiment to nestle in the mind and to emerge when our thoughts are more wistful, such as:

> You may break, you may shatter the vase as you will,
> But the scent of the roses will cling to it still;

but a revival of Moore would, I should guess, be impossible. Echoes of these, his tenderest lyrics, will play about in our memories, and his Life of Byron will hold its place on gentlemen's shelves; that is all. The great mass of his verse, with its commonplace thought and commonplace metre, will go, has gone.

V. A HILL-TOP TOMB

Some lines from a poem that I had to learn when I was a child came back to me the other day:

> And no one saw that sepulchre,
> And no one knew it ere
> The angel of God upturned the sod
> And laid the dead man there.

The lines were not too appropriate, since I was standing by a visible grave, but memory obeys no strict laws. And there were resemblances, too, for the grave was covered with turf and surrounded by turf, it was on the top of a hill, and it has no name. You climb the hill, fragrant on this hot September day with thyme, and there, within a square of iron railings, is the simple mound, as simple as a pauper's in a cemetery, although beneath this one lie the remains of the lord of the great estate of which Beacon Hill is a part, within sight of the castle of his long and illustrious line. For it is the grave of the late Earl of Carnarvon, who, the discoverer of the most sumptuous tomb in the world, was content with this frugal plainness. Should, I thought, a descendant of Tuth-an-Kamen (if such be) meditate reprisals, how easy his task!

By a symmetrical stroke of chance (essayist's luck) I was, the day after my visit to Highclere, the recipient of a pamphlet published by Mr.

Murray in 1821 at a shilling, entitled *Description of the Egyptian Tomb Discovered by G. Belzoni*, and thus had my thoughts turned to Lord Carnarvon's most important predecessor in Egyptian excavation. The pamphlet was sold for the information of visitors to the Egyptian Hall, in Piccadilly—called so for this reason—where a facsimile reconstruction of the tomb of Seti I (discovered by Belzoni in 1817) had been set up and was attracting great crowds.

This Giovanni Baptisti Belzoni was a very remarkable man, with beginnings so different from his career as an Egyptologist that Dame Fortune's caprices may almost be said to have surpassed themselves. The son of a barber of Rome, he was born at Padua in 1778; a child of unusual size, growing in due course into a giant six feet seven inches tall. He was educated in Rome, with an eye on the monastic life, but in 1798, at the French invasion, he broke away. By 1803, by which time he had made some progress as a hydraulic engineer, he came to England, where he found a wife, little, if any, his inferior in dimensions, and with her toured the London and country fairs as 'Strong man' and 'Strong woman'. We next find him in an engagement in Astley's Circus, as Apollo and Hercules, meanwhile continuing his experiments with water power.

From England he passed to Spain and Portugal, in an entertainment in which he impersonated Samson, and the next definite date in his story is 1815, when Fate had at last directed his steps successfully towards Egypt, his land of destiny, and he was at work on an irrigation scheme in one of the gardens of the Pasha, Mohammed Aly. Not, however, irrigation but excavation was his true métier, and in 1816 he had entered upon it, the way being made simpler by a commission from the British Consul-General to remove the granite bust of Rameses II from Thebes to shipboard, for conveyance to the British Museum, where it may be seen. This task inflamed his sleeping Egyptological spirit, and thenceforward he passed from discovery to discovery, always assisted very willingly by the natives, who were slavishly impressed by his commanding height. Chief of these discoveries was perhaps that of the sepulchre of Seti I, whose sarcophagus of alabaster is also in London—indeed, only a short distance from the bust of Rameses II—at Sir John Soane's museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

After the tomb of Seti I, familiarly called 'Belzoni's Tomb' by the guides, Belzoni's principal find was the internal chambers of the second pyramid of Gizeh. In 1819 he was back in England to write the inevitable book, which had a great success, to prepare for his exhibition, and

to taste the sweets of popularity. The lion-hunters all wanted this Colossus at their receptions, and he was so kindly and naïf that he refused no one. Not only was he interesting by reason of his accomplishment, but he had an amusing way of talking broken English that was very seducing, and the unaffected candour of his book was not its least merit.

I quote from the pamphlet Belzoni's account of his penetrations among the tombs.

> But what a place of rest! surrounded by bodies, by heaps of mummies on every side, which, previous to my being accustomed to the sight, impressed me with horror. The blackness of the walls, the faint light given by the candles or torches for want of air, the different objects that surrounded me, looking at, and seeming to converse with, each other, and the Arab guides, naked and covered with dust, themselves resembling living mummies, absolutely formed a scene that cannot be described. In such a situation I found myself several times, and when exhausted, fainting and nearly overcome, I sought a resting place, and found one, my weight bore on the body of an Egyptian, and it crushed like a band-box. I naturally had recourse to my hands to sustain my weight, but they found no better support, so that I sunk altogether among the broken mummies, with a crash of bones, rags, and wooden cases, which raised such a dust as kept me motionless for a quarter of an hour, waiting till it subsided again.

Belzoni's life was to be not long protracted after his literary success. He left England in 1823 to explore the Niger to its source, and,

falling ill from dysentery, was dead in December of the same year. He was buried at Gato in Benin. London, so far as I know, has no memorial of him other than the relics that he added to the museums; but Padua struck a medal in his honour.

From the Miller's Tomb, on Highdown Hill in Sussex, you see the Channel. From Lord Carnarvon's tomb no sea is visible; nothing but Hampshire rolling down to it in the south, and wooded Berkshire in the north. The two most famous graves on mountain tops are, I suppose, that excavated from the granite of the Matoppos in South Africa, and that on the summit of Mount Vaea in Samoa—the graves, namely, of Cecil Rhodes and Robert Louis Stevenson. I have not seen them, but neither man can sleep beneath a wider and starrier sky than Lord Carnarvon.

THE TWO LUNCHES

I HAD put myself for a whole spring day at the service of some friends from abroad.

'Where do you want to go?' I asked.

Anywhere, they said, that was pretty and English and blossomy.

Easy in April.

'But,' they added, 'do let there be an old-fashioned inn. The real thing.'

Not so simple, I told them; and I went on to lament the decay of that institution. Among the things that are no longer so good as they were, I assured them, the English roadside inn comes almost first. 'The causes are many,' I said, 'and not the least is the passing of the horse and, with the horse, leisure. Other factors contributing to the disaster,' I continued, 'are the company system, under which inns are acquired by syndicates and the landlords become mere managers; the high price of beer; the restrictions as to the hours of opening, and, by no means least, cold storage, which makes beef cheaper and affects its flavour.'

My friends looked depressed.

'All the same,' I said, 'there are a few innkeepers left who still make a gallant effort. There is, for instance, The Fakenham Arms, at Dullingworth. We will go there.'

There are days, as all travellers know, when things go wrong; and this was one of them. There was nothing the matter with the journey: the car ran well, the tyres avoided upturned nails, the sun shone, the pear-blossom was dazzling on the branches and primroses gleamed from the banks in terrestrial constellations. My friends were in ecstasies of appreciation.

But at The Fakenham Arms, where we arrived a little later than I had meant, our good luck ran out. The famous room, with its musicians' gallery high at one end and its array of choice furniture and ancient weapons against the walls, was a little too full; its staff was too busy. At the moment of our entrance the head-waiter was absent, and therefore we had to find a table unassisted (which did not matter), but also unnoticed (which mattered very much). The result was that we sat for many minutes without any attention at all, growing steadily more hungry and more thirsty, with no consolation but the hopeful perusal of the menu and the contemplation of leather bottels, culverins and other curiosities, which, from having on our arrival a lure as

quaint historical pieces, were now rapidly declining, in our estimation, into mere junk.

There are days when waiters, always deaf, are deafer, and, always blind, are blinder; and this was one. There are days when other people eat too much and receive too much attention; and this was one. At last I ran the elusive head-waiter to earth and succeeded in giving an order which in course of time was carried out; but without success, for the soup was chilly, the fish suspect and the mutton too tough for any of us.

Filled both with sorrow and with anger, but with nothing else, and ashamed of my country, I sent for the landlord and informed him of his shortcomings. Apologetic and apparently distressed, he made the usual offers. If we would wait a few minutes something should be specially cooked. A chop. Cutlets. What about a slice of ham?

But I refused. 'No,' I said, 'we will go somewhere else.' I had noticed a nice-looking inn on the other side of the wide street. 'We'll see what your rivals can do. We have had too unfortunate an experience here; you have failed too dismally. Some one else shall have our money this time.'

And so yet again the great mistake was committed by the famished, and one inn abandoned

for another. Only the famished can be so foolish. Better even to change horses in mid-stream.

A spectacle of delight to the replete and contented at the other tables, now basking under coffee and tobacco, we made the most dignified exit that was possible and crossed the road to The Cat and Adage, which had the appearance of comfort and might even, by a miracle, behind its pleasant façade conceal a solicitous host or hostess. But external paint and flower-boxes signify in these matters very little, and the lunch of the day must have been an innutritious affair when it was first ready. By now it had cooled and dwindled into something exceedingly unattractive; but as we were starving we made an effort to be filled, while I renewed the apologies begun across the way and again enlarged upon the decline and fall of the English inn.

'At any rate,' I said as the bill was laid before me, 'we have the satisfaction of not paying any more money to that fraud at The Fakenham Arms.'

At this moment who should enter the room but the fraud himself! He advanced smilingly upon us.

'I hope you've done better here than in my other house?' he said.

THE ROAD-MAKERS

'THIS,' said my companion, as we bowled through Northamptonshire over the smooth, grey, glistening tarmac, 'is Telford's road'.

How many times I have heard that phrase, 'Telford's road', I cannot say; but when a few days later I was shown one of Telford's canals and one of Telford's bridges (at Tewkesbury) I began to wonder why I did not know more of Telford himself—'Pontifex Maximus', or the 'Colossus of Roads', as his friend Southey called him. Surely his memory ought to be kept very green, especially by the new and myriad road-users that have sprung into being since the motor-car was invented, for he is the Father of their Pleasure.

Looking into the records I find that Thomas Telford was both a remarkable, forceful, imaginative engineer and a very engaging personality. As a peasant boy in Eskdale he was known as 'Laughing Tam', and as a London notability ripe in years his company was so sought after

that the Ship Inn at Charing Cross (which still stands, a little way down Whitehall, opposite Old Scotland Yard, but is now a foreign restaurant), where his London headquarters were, was always crowded. Even to be within his aura was a delight. An excellent story is told of the purchaser of the good-will of this hostelry, who had concluded his bargain without knowing that Telford was about to move into a house of his own in Abingdon Street. 'Not leaving!' he exclaimed, in dismay. 'Why, I've just paid £750 for you!'

Thomas Telford was born at Westerkirk, in Eskdale, in Dumfries-shire, in 1757. His father, a shepherd, died soon after, and the boy was brought up by his mother, who lived to a great old age, long enough to be proud of his career. To the end of her life the engineer, no matter how busy he might be, used to set apart an hour or so to tell her the news, printing every word as clearly as he could in capital letters in order that she might read it with the least possible difficulty. At first, the boy was a farm hand, picking up what education he might, but at fifteen he was apprenticed to a mason at Langholm; where a lady, Miss Pasley, gave him the freedom of her library. It was here that he found the poets—Milton and Burns being his favourites—and himself commenced poet, too.

One of his efforts was an address to Burns urging him to do more in the manner of 'The Cottar's Saturday Night'; another was a eulogy of Eskdale written in heroic couplets.

In 1780 he made his first journey into the world, accepting a job as a mason in Edinburgh, where he put all the chief buildings under close scrutiny. Not till 1782, when he was twenty-five, did he take the inevitable step for a young Scotchman of ambition and set out for London, the opportunity of travelling economically being offered by an Eskdale laird who wished to send a horse to the Metropolis. Telford's cousin, the laird's factor, arranged the matter, and was so friendly as to lend his own riding garments for the expedition. Telling the story (as he often did) in later days he used to add, 'but Tam forgot to send me back my breeks.'

Telford's first London employment was at Somerset House, then building under Sir William Chambers. His next move was to Portsmouth, to superintend some new official dockyard structures. His real chance came in 1786, when he settled in Shrewsbury, to be of assistance to a son of the Eskdale laird horse-owner, Mr. Pulteney, who had changed his name from Johnstone on marrying the niece of the Earl of Bath. Thus do the Scotch stick together. With Pulteney's influence Telford became Surveyor

of Public Works for the county of Salop, and it was then that his interest in roads and canals and bridges was kindled, for all these things were under his control. From this moment he never, as we say, looked back: his life was one long and continuous series of plans and projects and accomplished feats. Two accidents (as accidents will) increased his prestige. One was the collapse of the tower of St. Chad's at Shrewsbury, which was so considerate as to fall precisely as Telford had warned the vestrymen that it would; and the other was the discovery of the remains of the Roman Uriconium, beneath ploughed fields near Wroxeter, and Telford's successful preservation of the bath, hypocaust, and other vestiges of the old civilization.

To-day the Roman and his trouble are ashes under Uricon.

A red-letter day in the Surveyor's life was when Mrs. Jordan visited the Shrewsbury theatre. Some one took him to a concert during her week's engagement, and he could hardly bear himself as the precious evening hours were frittered away: 'One look, one word, by Mrs. Jordan,' he said, 'has more effect upon me than all the fiddlers in England.'

Telford's greatest early work was the construction of the Ellesmere canal, which had to be carried high across the valley of the Ceriog.

This mighty task took from 1796 to 1801. The other and greater aqueduct—the Pont-Cysylltan—took from 1795 to 1803, and was opened in 1805. Sir Walter Scott said it was the most impressive work of art he had ever seen.

The great Scottish road-making enterprise of the early years of the last century was carried out by Telford; nine hundred and twenty miles of good road and one hundred and twenty bridges did he make, and by so doing, in his own words, 'advanced the country at least a century.' It was he also who planned and constructed the Caledonian Canal and many Scottish harbours. But to English people—and Irish—his greatest boon was the Holyhead road and the Menai suspension bridge. This bridge, then one of the world's wonders, was begun in 1819, and the first coach and four went over it on 30th January, 1826.

Telford died, unmarried, full of honours, and to the grief of many friends high and lowly, on 2nd September, 1834, leaving his modest fortune to various public institutions. You will find his tomb in the middle nave of Westminster Abbey, and in the east aisle of the north transept his statue.

Both Telford and John Loudon McAdam, an almost exact contemporary, saw the beginning

and rise of the locomotive engine and the railway system, which was to doom the canal and prejudice the road. The canal has never come back, but, with all their Northern sagacity, they might be surprised to see how the road to-day, a century later, is rivalling the iron track.

OLD MAPS

WE live and—if we are sufficiently receptive—learn. A week ago if you had asked me to describe the map known as Mercator's Projection—that sensible flat presentation of a world usually made incredible by globes—I should have said that it was a chart prepared for the use of merchant navigators; hence its name. But now, having spent an enchanted hour over a new and comely book entitled *Old Decorative Maps and Charts*, written by Mr. A. L. Humphreys, and published by Messrs. Halton and Truscott Smith, I know better. I now know that that illuminating and alluring portrayal of our planet takes its name from its discoverer, one Gerardus Mercator—a Latinized form of Gerhard Kremer (a trader), who was as human an entity as you or I.

Born in Flanders in 1512, Mercator became geographer to the Emperor Charles V. The projection dates from 1568, its purpose being thus stated:

'If you wish', says Mercator to the marines studying it, ' to sail from one port to another, here is a chart and a straight line on it, and if you follow carefully this line you will certainly arrive at your port of destination. But the length of the line may not be correct, and I warn you that although its length may not be correct, yet it points in the right direction. Consequently, if you adhere to this line you may get to your destination sooner, or you may not get there as soon as you expect, but you will certainly get there.'

So intelligent and enterprising a man, living at that time, could hardly escape the religious fever, and Mercator went so far in his sympathy with the new Protestantism as to be arrested and tried for heresy. Out of the two and forty suspects also in custody, one had his head cut off, two were burnt, and two others were merely buried alive; but the cosmographer survived and eventually died in his bed at the age of eighty-two.

For some reason or other—probably their ambition as sailors and colonists—the Dutch became the great map-makers of the world, shown the way by this illustrious Fleming, and by his pupil and follower, Abraham Ortelius, of Antwerp, who became geographer to Philip II of Spain. Many of Mr. Humphreys' examples are drawn from Dutch sources, the most notable of the map-makers being William Janszoor Blaeu, born at Alkmaar in 1571, the intimate friend of Tycho Brahe, the astronomer. For many years the Blaeus, father and sons, were the principal

cartographers of the world, their head-quarters being Amsterdam. Blaeu's first atlas, published in 1631, was remarkable not only for its thoroughness, but for its charming detail. Mr. Humphreys' plates are, however, taken from the Blaeus' *Nieuwe Atlas* of 1642, and I defy you to find anything prettier than the map of Belgian Picardy, with its coat-of-arms in one corner and its harvesting peasants in another, and all the woods and rivers between, from Compiègne in the south to 'Estaples' in the north.

It was to the Dutch that we had to go for our own more comely cartography, as the map of Oxfordshire from Jansson's *Novus Atlas*, 1658, will show. Reading is the most southerly name, and you then trace the Thames, through Abbington to Oxford, with indicated spires, as far as Lachlade, and the Cherwell to Banburye; while at the top are the arms of the colleges, most delicately tinted, and at the foot two learned mathematicians. To the English reader the most interesting maps in this fascinating book will naturally be those that, like the Oxfordshire example, take note of his own country, and he will again be struck by the changing values of our villages and towns. Often and often one finds the stress being laid upon places that, of some importance then, are now only hamlets or names.

I don't know whether Vermeer of Delft was the first painter to recognize the decorative value of maps, but so far as my memory takes me I can think of no predecessor. I have in mind a Metsu with a similar background, but it is likely that the inspiration to adopt it was derived from the greater master. We have not in any public gallery in England a Vermeer with this accessory, but examples will be familiar to readers from reproductions. The Medici Society, for example, have recently added the so-called self-portrait at Vienna to their list, and this has a map of peculiar richness, for not only does it represent Holland as a whole, but it is surrounded by little panel views of its principal cities. Mr. Humphreys might have given us this picture both as a map and as a proof of what maps can mean to an artist.

No map in this book is ugly, but some are more beautiful than others, and that one which to my eyes gives most delight is by a contemporary of Vermeer, also a Dutchman, Pieter Goos, and is taken from his *Zee-Atlas*, published at Amsterdam in 1666, when Vermeer was thirty-four. The particular example chosen represents the New Netherlands and the contiguous ocean, and the peculiar charm of it lies in the colouring of its capricious coast-line and its fanciful ornamentation, but chiefly in the two vessels under

full canvas bravely advancing on their course. These ships are not only symbolic of romance, but they have been placed in the picture with the inevitability of Whistler, and they have the serenity of the younger Van de Velde. It is by no means impossible that that exquisite artist assisted Goos, for in 1666 he was thirty-three.

Coming to the question of cartography generally, I am all in sympathy with Denham, a character in one of Miss Macaulay's novels, who wanted every book to have a map. Every book, every story, too: not merely those of adventure like *Treasure Island*, but the latest domestic chronicle. How grateful we were when Father Knox published in the *London Mercury* his map of the Trollope country! The map of the island in *The Admirable Crichton* made a wonderful poster, you will recollect, and must have sent many hesitants to the play. Mr. Milne put an elucidating chart at the beginning of *Winnie the Pooh*, all to that book's advantage. I recall also a remarkable map of fairyland by Mr. Bernard Sleigh, made for nursery walls, and Mr. Macdonald Gill's most amusing and ingenious map of London on the enterprising hoardings of the Underground.

I who speak go as far as to say I should like maps everywhere. I would far prefer a map

just inside our great departmental stores to the task of detaching a shop-walker and engaging his attention: a map fortified by frequent sign-posts. These two friends of stumbling, blundering man should be everywhere, hand in hand.

THE FIVE VARIETIES

THE people from whom one asks the way are to be divided into five varieties. Let us take them in order, beginning with those who, while telling you, repeat their instructions many times.

'Excuse me,' you say in your sweetest tones, 'but could you tell me the way to Lower Upperdown?'

'Lower Upperdown?' they say. 'Oh, yes. You follow this road for about a mile, when you come to The Golfers' Arms. Opposite that is a turning on the left, but you don't take that; you take the next, opposite The Footballers' Legs. Then after another mile you see a turning on the right, and that brings you straight into Lower Upperdown.'

'Thank you,' you say, and prepare to move on; but you are an optimist.

'Yes,' he says, detaining you, 'you don't turn by The Golfers' Arms, but wait till you come to The Footballers' Legs. You can't go wrong. There's a sign-post. And then keep on for about

a mile. Don't turn to the left there, but to the right.'

'Thank you, thank you,' you say.

'Don't forget to pass The Golfers' Arms,' he reminds you. 'There's a turning there, but don't take it.'

'All right, thanks. Yes, yes,' you say, looking back.

'You can't go wrong,' he calls out. 'Turn down opposite The Footballers' Legs, not The Golfers' Arms.'

'Right!' you shout back; 'right. Thank you very much.'

'You're welcome,' he bellows in reply. 'You can't go wrong.'

Well, that is tiresome enough, but wait till you chance on the man who, as it happens, is going that way himself and will show you. This is the type who most wants a little sociability, at the same time that what you most want is to be let alone. Like *Madame Bad Luck* in Colonel John Hay's poem:

> They sit by your bed
> And they bring their knitting.

Disentangling is always one of life's sternest problems.

'It's about two miles,' he says, 'or perhaps nearer three. I'm not sure. Nearer three, I

should say, although it may be only just over two. Distances are hard to judge. It's straight along the road; but I'll show you. It's all on my way: no, you're not taking me out of my way at all. It's a pleasure to show you. I know what it is myself to be lost, and so often there's no one to tell you. Lucky I happen to be going this way myself; and it's pure chance, too, for I was going the other way if it hadn't been for a message. You can't miss it ; it's straight along the road, but I'll show you. We've been having a lot of wet lately, haven't we?'

You are in despair. 'But really, hadn't you better do the other job first?' you say. 'It's a shame to drag you along with me like this.'

'Oh, no,' he replies; 'that's all right. I like to help. Besides I'm going your way, and if I show you you can't go wrong. It's right on the road; about a mile and a half now, I should say. Or a mile and three quarters. No, a mile and a half.'

You set your cunning to work. 'Oh, hang!' you exclaim suddenly, 'there's a stone in my boot. I must stop here and take it out. You go on.'

'Oh, no,' he says, 'I'll wait. I'm in no hurry and I like to show you the way. A wonderful chance that I should be going there myself this morning. I haven't been there this year. Have I? Yes, I'm wrong, I was there in April.

Funny how one forgets. Don't hurry; I'll wait. Nothing so uncomfortable, I always say, as a stone in one's boot.'

Meanwhile you are removing a boot which, as you know, is as free from stones as the centre court at Wimbledon.

'But I implore you not to wait,' you say. 'It's too bad I should mess up your morning like this. Do go on.'

'Oh, no,' he says, 'I'll wait. I'm going there myself and it's a pleasure to be able to guide a stranger.'

With a cry of satisfaction so realistic that it should get you an engagement at the Lyceum, you extract and throw away an imaginary pebble, sigh with feigned relief, replace your boot and accept your destiny.

The third variety is the man who tells you right—quickly.

The fourth variety is the man who tells you wrong—quickly.

But all these are rare. The fifth variety is the commonest: the man who is sorry, but he is a stranger in these parts.

GERMAN WANDERINGS

I. 'MORE HASTE . . .'

THOSE of you who know Berlin will recall the chain of inland waters to the near west of it, of which the most easily accessible from the capital is Wannsee. These lakes, and particularly Wannsee, form the finest kind of 'lung' for the city, and on fine summer days all Berlin hastens thither to sail, to bathe, to make excursions on the steamers, or merely to sit at a table in one of the shore restaurants and imbibe beer. Neither London nor Paris has anything of the kind, although the Thames and the Seine no doubt do their best: particularly the Thames, for navigation on the Seine, bureaucracy's own stream, is hampered by restrictions. I can best bring Wannsee before the stranger by saying that it as as though Southampton Water were distant from Charing Cross less than half an hour, and trains every few minutes, and every train full.

For the masses Berlin has its trains; for the

few people who can afford to hire cars, and for the fewer who own them, it has made a motor-track five miles long between the city and Wannsee, on which you may drive at whatever pace you will. Now and then races are held there, but for the most part it is used as a thoroughfare for those in a hurry who would visit Wannsee, or play golf just beyond it, or reach their homes in this delectable neighbourhood. Sixty to eighty miles an hour is a common rate of progress, and even the smaller taxis can compass their fifties and are very glad to have the opportunity of doing so. There are two parallel tracks, each 'one way.'

All except one, and this brings me to my story: the narrative of what should have been a record of progress but becomes a record only of humiliation.

I had been spending the day very serenely in a motor-boat up and down these inland seas admiring the skill with which the yachtsmen handled their fragile craft and doing my best to understand the boatman's guide-book remarks. All that I gathered was that any house in its own wooded grounds of more than common luxury and comfort belonged to a banker. Hither and thither we pantingly sped, from the steps of the Royal Palace at Potsdam itself (Potsdam being a bit of a Venice) to the inlets

of bourgeois Pickelsdorf, out-distancing everything, from the barges on their way to or from Hamburg, which was easy, to the ever-present police-boat, which was difficult. The sun shone, the breeze was just not strong enough to blow the spray into the boat, and the sandy shores set apart for bathers were a moving mass of gay costumes and the colour of flesh, under a belt of dark fir-trees. A very pleasing day.

At about five I disembarked outside the Wannsee station, carefully selected a powerful-looking, ex-private car, now a taxi, for the return journey to Berlin: having decided to go by the racing-track, or Avus as it is called, 'all out'. For this privilege—for a single bout of unrestricted impetuous onset—the trifling sum of eighteenpence is asked; and, having paid it, I sank back like a Nero, prepared for excitement and excess, even though the tyres should burst. To go as fast as possible, with no chance of meeting anything on the road, would be a new experience.

But once again, on a planet where frustration of anticipation is almost the only thing that its inhabitants can count upon, once again hopes were shattered. We began gloriously. We leapt forward with a rush and for half a kilometre boomed over the asphalt; and then suddenly the engine failed. Out sprang the driver and

buried his head in the bonnet, while other cars fled past and I sat inside, feeling myself to be the most stationary object in Europe. Again we started and again we stopped, and the driver sprang out and buried his head in the bonnet while I sat inside conscious that I was plumbing ignominy's depths. And what about that eighteenpence, that one-mark-fifty? I was not only a figure of derision but I was losing money.

The driver on each return to his box told me all about his trouble, but, having no German outside restaurants, I was none the wiser. Besides, what did it matter? The speed's the thing. Speed, however, was not to be mine that day, for six times in all did we fail, and we succeeded in only just reaching the gates.

There I bade the driver farewell and entered the adjoining beer-garden for a little restoration before resuming the broken journey to the centre of the city. The sun was still hot, the beer was cold, and I loitered for twenty minutes or so watching the groups at the other tables under the striped umbrellas, all so happily conversant. For the Germans surpass any people that I know in their beaming and vocal content in each other's company.

At length I rose to go, first having sent a messenger to find me a cab: a good one. ('Taxi goot, goot taxi.') There is no rank thereabouts

and I was still more than a quarter of an hour from my hotel, even in a fast car. A fast car! —melancholy phrase.

The boy came back to say that for the well-born he had a goot taxi secured, and out I went to get into it and away.

It was the same cab that I had had before.

II. THE HARZ MOUNTAINS

I had always understood that the Germans liked walking, but I never knew that fact from personal observation until the other day in the Harz Mountains, when I saw them ascending the Brocken. They were attacking the slopes of that very substantial eminence in their thousands, male and female, mostly with knapsacks on their backs, and all with sticks in their hands, and the males seldom with hats on their heads, or indeed with any hats at all.

Not only were there young men and maidens, but their fathers and uncles and mothers and aunts, and even their grandfathers and grandmothers. It was like a multiplied 'Pilgrim's Progress', or 'Excelsior' indefinitely extended, even though they retained their burdens on their shoulders and bore no banners with a strange device. The strangest thing about them next to their persistence, hardihood and geniality, was the shining hairlessness of the men, who,

even the young ones, with great prudence, anticipate Time's thinning of their locks. They deprive that melancholy and inevitable process of its sting and stigma by having their heads shaved; and so closely that the disclosed whiteness of their scalps glistens like lustres and deflects the rays of the sun in a thousand directions. We English did this in the eighteenth century, but threw away our advantages by wearing wigs. Should the Brocken ever need a slogan, it could be found in the story of Elisha and the bears: 'Go up, thou baldhead'.

No bears, however, did I see; no fauna of any kind, not even a solitary representative of the canary family, for which this wooded tract is famed. I had expected to catch yellow glimpses of them on the edges of the sombre pine-forests: I had thought to be regaled by their unconquerable song; but no. The bird of Germany is neither eagle nor canary, but something between the two: in short, the goose. Every village has troops of these deliberate and undignified creatures, mostly under surveillance, so that you come to understand why the goose-girl plays so prominent a part in German folk-lore, just as among the straight and slender columns of the firs the continual sight of wood-cutters at work brings the Brothers Grimm again and enchantingly to mind.

To what extent English people are still avoiding Germany I cannot say. I saw but few in Berlin, although many Americans, and two only in the Harz mountains; but if they could get over their prejudices they would find a very cordial welcome and a perfect holiday hunting-ground. For walking in good air, with no fatiguing distance at any point from houses of refreshment, this district could not be surpassed. The wise German tourist marches on his stomach, and the English marcher is glad to follow his example, especially at these high and hungry altitudes. Moreover, some one to speak the English language can always be found, for it is the German's second tongue.

You can start for the great climb from any of the little towns about it, all of which seemed to be crowded beyond their capacity, and especially perhaps Werningerode, which I think of now as an ingratiating and seething blend of ancient timbered seventeenth-century façades, some of them brightly painted, with twentieth-century picture-postcard shops beneath them, and hotels at every few steps. Under the gay jumble of medieval architecture and carving that makes the Town Hall, is, as so often in Germany, a beer-saloon, whither these happy frugal folk, according to the sensible custom of the country, may carry their own food. I can

picture the indignation of an English caterer if his dearly-nourished privilege of charging too much for indifferent food were encroached upon in this way. But anything less like our tourist hotels and refreshment rooms than those of Germany could not be imagined, everything over there being clean and orderly, and fair in price, and the attendance careful and constant. This to some extent is due to the German habit of making things easy for each other and working together, which you see in every walk of life; to some extent due also to a national lack of impatience and irascibility. But the unquestioning orderliness that is in the blood is the principal cause.

Halberstadt is the outlying capital of the Harz Mountains; Werningerode is their chief show town, and Bad Harzburg the social centre. It is there that the hotels are most splendid, the shops most expensive and cosmopolitan, and life least like that of the rugged mountaineer. There is, for example, a casino where an odd form of roulette is played, and where the band breaks into those jazzed melodies which have done so much to poison my existence and have completely ruined restaurant cooking. Bad Harzburg is also higher than the other towns, so that you sleep in a more rarefied atmosphere, and are the healthier in consequence. Never

did I sleep so soundly; never with fewer invasions by the affairs of daytime.

A curious thing about the Harz Mountains is the indomitable railway, which curls its way even in impossible places, and so secretly that the sight of the station is often a surprise. There is a line even to the summit of the Brocken, but it is used more to take people down than up. To climb the Brocken is the thing. Having done that, and restored and rewarded the triumphant legs and courageous heart, it is better to allow machinery to arrange for the return journey, which, compared with the bold ascent, is at its best an ignominious business. As for the Brocken hotel, it is startling in its unexpected dimensions. You approach it as though it were the German equivalent of the inn that used to be—and may still be—at the Devil's Dyke, near Brighton. It looks from without hardly any bigger. But inside it becomes vast. Immense rooms lead one from the other, with long tables at which are seats beyond counting. How such a multitude can be successfully fed with well-cooked food (including some of the freshest ocean fish I have ever eaten) is a marvel. But there it is. Fresh fish is, however, a German speciality. At my hotel at Bad Harzburg, a great distance from the nearest seaport, a basket of live lobsters was carried

round so that the guests might select which crustacean they would most like to make its turnings from *noir* to *rouge*. And not a resort of Luculluses either. I remember the Brocken hotel also as being the only place where I have eaten a species of mushroom called Fairy Rings, in a little room with the story of Tannhäuser frescoed freely on the walls.

'And what,' you ask, 'of the Brocken's Spectre? How did that phantom strike you?' I saw it not.

GOD'S HOUSES

THE constant cries of two tame jackdaws known as L. and P. (readers of the *Hibbert Journal* will appreciate the inwardness of this nomenclature) having filled me with a longing for a cathedral atmosphere, with the agreeable discord of these black guardians dropping from the sky and mingling with the heat, I took advantage of an empty July day and revisited Gloucester and Tewkesbury. A sweeter, more fragrant expedition was never made, for there was hay-making all the way, and now and then a burst of lime-blossom; and how many of the Gloucestershire peasants, I wondered, were, in the manner of their French cousins, during the next week or so to pick and dry and garner the lime's delicate flowers? Almost none, possibly none. This is a strange thing, that on the far side of the Channel dried lime-blossoms, dried verbena leaves, dried camomile flowers, even dried cherry stalks, should be preserved in the attics and converted at need into a soothing extract very good for the nerves, for the diges-

tion, and for sleeplessness, while on our own side all are wasted. The conditions of French and English life are too similar for such a discrepancy; thrift and unthrift should not be so geographical; and a few words spoken in the right way in English village schools might correct the waste. Might.

I came to Gloucester from the east by way of Birdlip, where all in a moment the indigo valley of the Severn is unfolded to the eyes, with the Welsh mountains beyond. Except that man planted hedges you think little of him as you look over the great plain, for its cities are lost in the illimitable blue. Not till Gloucester is reached does the cathedral tower with its four delicate spires assert itself over the roofs. Such a tower, radiant in its light-grey stone, and made almost ethereal by its open-work! But unlike Canterbury, where the jackdaws call incessantly, this tower was silent. Inside the temperature fell, as it does in summer in holy places, and we wandered in great comfort—all in the cathedral mode, hat in hand, slowly, investigatingly, with heads upturned to the ceiling. The vergers must have a poor opinion of us; but then so have we of them, with their petty restrictions and sixpenny subterfuges. In few English cathedrals that I have been in has everything been open. Always something withheld; and

at Gloucester it was the beautiful cloisters. There were the doors, but none to unlock them.

The tower of Tewkesbury Abbey is exceedingly comforting, in its solidity, its Norman arches, and its warm tints. Gloucester's cathedral tower is almost too lovely for human nature's daily food; Tewkesbury's inspires confidence. And the massive Norman pillars within are friendly, too. But again I missed the sharp familiar cries of the Church's tutelary bird. Can it be that jackdaws are discouraged in Gloucestershire? The friendliness of Tewkesbury Abbey (on week-days) was emphasized by the presence of a large number of women, with children and market baskets, who had made it a retreat from the sun and were gossiping together. This seemed to me very proper, although unusual, and I was therefore the more surprised to find the notices at the doors stating that under no conditions whatever can this beautiful sanctuary be inspected on Sundays. I had been shocked recently at Lichfield to find a notice limiting the visiting hours of Sunday to 2.30 and 4.0; but to close a sacred historic building, a national treasure-house, to sightseers altogether on the only day on which many people can visit it seems to me a strange proceeding. Is the Church so strong that it can dispense with windfalls? Does it even despise

them? Almost one would think so. What, I wonder, would Theoc have said, the Northumbrian missionary who first spread the glad tidings here in the seventh century. All the same, one admires the frankness of these Tewkesbury Abbey martinets, who seem to look upon God's house as entirely their own. No nonsense about them; take it, they say, or leave it.

After so much architectural splendour I went down to Deerhurst, near the Severn, for a breath of Saxon air. For Deerhurst has two pre-Norman edifices, a church and a chapel, in very good preservation. Not that the late Saxon period is so very long ago—only thirty to forty generations—but it seems remote enough until we rifle Luxor's tombs. Although it has been much tinkered, the Deerhurst church retains enough of the original Saxon structure to make it a place of pilgrimage. Yet here again the imagination of the Establishment breaks down, for the church is at the end of the village, whereas the keys are in the sexton's house in the village itself a hundred yards away. Were an intimation of this arrangement proffered at the sexton's door, the curious—for all must pass his house—would be saved the double journey to the church and back again. But no. That double journey is, unless other visitors are there first, inevitable, and before you can enter the building, even if your purpose

is not antiquarian curiosity but genuine devotion, you must pay sixpence.

Saxon architecture, especially when wafts of lime-blossom float through the door, is very soothing in its simplicity, and I had my sixpennyworth. A female relative of the elusive sexton lectured on the fane with precision and refinement, but conjecture plays too great a part in her story and the mystery of the famous twin pyramidal windows in the inside wall of the tower, so foreign, even Egyptian, in their air, was not elucidated. Afterwards she led us—for other pilgrims had arrived—to the tiny chapel across the way, built by one Odda, lord of the manor, as long ago as 1056, in which to celebrate masses for the soul of his brother Elfric. Five centuries later a farmhouse was joined to it, and the chapel converted to an outhouse or farm annexe, even a hall of revelry, for there are traces of a big fireplace. Within recent years the real purpose of the chapel was discovered, and its sanctity restored. A curious experience for these walls, after so long a secular interregnum, to see us taking off our hats again.

Having too often perhaps girded at the time restrictions and sixpenny fees to be contended with in many cathedrals, let me say roundly that Chester Cathedral is a model. It is the most friendly and welcoming English cathedral that I

have ever entered. Not a closed door; not a verger in sight; everything explained and made interesting by placards; picture-postcards on sale everywhere at twopence each, but no one to collect the twopences—you are put on your honour to drop them in a slot; and, more perhaps than all, there are garden-seats—seats on which you may sit—around the fish-pond and fountains and among the flower-beds of the cloisters. I was never more pleased, more surprised.

At first it had seemed incredible. I stepped warily, at every turn wondering more and more what could have happened, why I was being given such latitude, why I was unmolested. In God's most beautiful and most spacious houses we get so accustomed to importunity and warnings. Was there a vergers' strike? Had there been a massacre of vergers? And then, at the entrance to the Slype, I found one of the notices explaining the position. 'Free access to the whole cathedral', it runs, 'both on Sundays and week-days, is given to visitors, in the confidence that they will in return——' And then follow the expectations, which are, briefly, that they will behave themselves and remember that cathedrals are expensive to maintain. That surely is the way to do it.

Chester Cathedral is not only very interesting architecturally and historically, but a centre of

zeal and activity. One side chapel, for instance, is dedicated to the boy scouts and kindred organizations, and a mass of literature is at your disposal; another, that of St. George (who in a wooden relief over the altar is seen in conflict with a really worthy dragon), to the Cheshire Regiment; another, that of St. Werburgh, to the girl guides. St. Werburgh, whose shrine is here, is a Chester notability, daughter of the King of Mercia, a girl who, though beautiful and much courted by Princes, preferred the religious life to matrimony. She died at Ely in 699, and her body was brought here to save it from the marauding Danes.

The Cathedral library is open to all without an attendant, so that you may sit down to any book you wish, or merely study the curiosities that are displayed in cases, among these being an illuminated copy of the *Polychronicon* of Runolf Higden, a fourteenth-century Benedictine of Chester, whom you will find, with the famous Abbot Whitchurch, in a window of the cloisters, both of them far too young and handsome for monks, and robed in rich blue. The refectory is still often used for banquets to visiting pilgrims, and at the end of it is a platform with so secular a fitting as footlights.

No wonder that again I say all honour to the liberty and enlightenment of Chester Cathedral's

Dean and Chapter; and may other deans and chapters follow their example!

As for the amazing city of Chester, it is too late to praise that. Although the rain fell I loitered dry and entertained along the mysterious Rows, marvelling much at the odd levels, but even more at the profusion of dealers in antiques. If I did not know that Chester flourished on American sightseers I should imagine that the inhabitants subsisted solely by selling each other curiosities. Apart from the Rows, Chester's timber façades alone would make it unique, but it is a city of the unexpected too. The ages mingle in the oddest way. Entering a haberdasher's for a modest requirement I was invited to descend below the shop to a Roman bath, the price of the entrance ticket being deducted from that of my purchase. Elsewhere I consumed a meat-pie at a table set out daintily beneath the groined roof of a thirteenth-century crypt. Nor were the ingredients of the pie in the least cryptic.

A NURSERY CLASSIC

MOTOR-CARS and charabancs may do their worst to make its roads noisy and even unsafe, but the New Forest as a whole, the New Forest where it is green and purple, remains a sanctuary, and it is little likely to be much injured. I saw a great deal of it the other day between Cadnam and Beaulieu, following upon a recent visit to Bulmer Lawn, and I can vouch for its inviolable seclusion. Parts of it would still be very perilous to be benighted in. Cattle are frequently bogged to this day.

The diversity and wide extent of the Forest are always a surprise, whether one is among the giant trees, or beside the Beaulieu River, or on the heathery heights near the airy house that Auberon Herbert built. Indeed, from those altitudes it would seem to be illimitable. And everywhere I went there were ponies. I never noticed so many before. Ponies and pony foals: the foals the shyest, gayest, and most engaging little creatures in the world: not more beautiful, of course, than fawns, because nothing could be

more beautiful than fawns; but more attractive by reason of that touch of naughtiness which is the pony's birthright. What becomes of all these merry midgets, I should like to know. One now sees so few ponies in harness that it is a mystery; but in the new and spacious and almost disconcertingly urban hotel that has been built at Beaulieu I found a notice to the effect that two ladies are prepared to sell them.

Although wild deer I did not see, not a glimpse of them, how natural, on returning to the artificial life, to take down *The Children of the New Forest* and endeavour to recapture some of the delicious flavours of fifty years ago!

Captain Marryat's nursery classic wears, I find, extremely well, and I had forgotten enough for something like excitement now and then to overcome me. I rejoice not to be too old to be thrilled by such a speech as this, by Jacob, the ancient forester, to Edward Beverley, the elder of the children: 'Now, Edward, do you stay here while I go back to the lee side of the covert; I will enter it with Smoker, and the stag will, in all probability, when he is roused, come out to breast the wind. You will then have a good shot at him; recollect to fire so as to hit him behind the shoulder; if he is moving quick, fire a little before the shoulders; if slow, take aim accurately; but recollect, if I come upon him in the covert,

I shall kill him if I can, for we want the venison, and then we will go after another to give you a chance.' With what sound instinct the novelist mariner chose the Forest and the vicissitudes of the Royalists as his background! No story for the young can go wrong if behind the scenes there is a romantic generous King in hiding from repellent foes, and a company of young aristocrats who have to earn their living in diguise and are set to such fascinating tasks as shooting deer (often against the law framed by the repellent foes), trapping wild cattle, and, for the girls, cooking venison pasties. Even without Royalist and Roundhead this book would still—by virtue of its *Robinson Crusoe* and *Swiss Family Robinson motive*—be assured of success; but with that theme added it was made doubly rich.

The odd thing is that the gallant Captain, whose knowledge of the vernacular was so liberal, allowed himself to be handicapped by making the children talk like books—and not merely books, but stilted books. Listen to Edward, aged fifteen, in conversation with the Intendant. (By the way, I find that the Intendant is not what, for half a century, I have been thinking him. All that time he has been to me a kind of standard of frosty, aloof, rigid superiority. When I have met such a man in real life I have said to myself that he was like the Intendant. I find

now that the Intendant was much more human.) Here, however, is Edward, aged fifteen, vocal: 'Sir, it is a base dog that bites the hand that feeds him. Jacob Armitage, and his father before him, were retainers in the family of Colonel Beverley: they were indebted to him for the situation they now hold in the Forest; indebted to him for everything; they revere his name, they uphold the cause for which he fell, as I do.' It is more than probable that the author, who could not be bothered with philological research, made Edward talk like that to be on the safe side. When he forgot the maxim 'Safety first' he could let Humphrey be sufficiently anachrostic, in 1647, as to remark: 'Anyhow, Alice, if only we had a cow, wouldn't that be jolly?'

But what do these blemishes matter? Nothing. The story's the thing, and nothing interferes with the drama or interest of that narrative until the last page, when Charles the Second, now on the throne again, gives away all three brides to their three soldier husbands, one of them Edward, with the remark: 'Could loyalty be better rewarded?'

I find that *The Children of the New Forest* was the last of his books to be published in Marryat's lifetime. The date is 1847, and he died in 1848. The joyous series of nautical yarns by which he is best known had begun in 1829 with *Frank*

Mildmay. He was then in active service, commander of the *Ariadne*. He left the sea in 1830, at the age of thirty-eight, and emboldened by the popularity of *Frank Mildmay*, took to literature. Those glorious books, *Peter Simple*, *Jacob Faithful*, *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, and *The Pirate and the Three Cutters*, all belong to the early thirties. Marryat's last period was given to efforts to please younger readers, and then in 1847, after four years of residence on a farm in Norfolk, a sudden and mastering desire to be a sailor again came to him, as later it was to come to a greater writer of the sea, if not so distinguished a captain—to Joseph Conrad in his rural home in Kent. Neither man realized his wish, and Marryat took the refusal so hard as to burst a blood-vessel and die from it. That was in 1848.

OLD BRIGHTON

IF we hear fewer street-organs than we used to, the reason probably is that music is generally more accessible. Broadcasting, the gramophone, and the mechanical piano-player have brought it sufficiently to the home. At the same time one must admit that it is doubtful if in the street-organ's heyday it was the musician's tune that he was as a rule paid for; the generous provided him with half-pence, pennies, or six-pences, less as the price of his wares than as a benevolent act, an encouragement, and it is probably so still. 'Here, my good man,' are the unspoken words accompanying the coin, 'take this, not because I care personally for your janglements, but because they may please others who lack my taste but need cheering up, and also because I am sorry for you having to listen continually to such strains.' For the organ-grinder, even though he sets street children merrily dancing, and does not whine, is within the class known as beggars. Not a full beggar, since he does something; but within the class.

If you give nothing his eyes can be very reproachful—mendicancy's privilege.

Some of the Italian organ-grinders, once so common a feature of daily life, used to carry on their business very ingratiatingly and make many friends. I remember one who used to visit a certain munificent house in the country some thirty or forty years ago. He had his routes, as regular as a clock-winder, and his time-table brought him, bowing and smiling, to this family's gates every Saturday morning: himself, the organ (the kind with a wooden leg which is carried on the back), and, in a little red jacket and forage cap, his monkey. The procedure never changed: first, he laid aside the organ, from which, after the notes that heralded his approach, no other was allowed to emerge; then he consumed on the steps a sausage and a cup of coffee, while his familiar ate nuts; and then into the monkey's hand was placed a sixpence, which it transferred to its master's. More bowing and smiling, and the visit ended. This organ-grinder differed from all others of his calling in the matter of reciprocity, for on returning each year from his holidays in Italy he brought to the lady of the house a votive bottle of alleged Chianti.

Whether most Italian organ-grinders in those more prosperous times made the annual pilgrimage from Saffron Hill to Piedmont, I cannot say;

but certainly the member of the fraternity whom in very early days I knew best did not, for he was never missing from his accustomed haunt. This was the bearded musician, in a conical hat of once-white felt, such as clowns wear, perched on his bushy black head, who was known as Charlie—he referred to himself in that way—and who, in the eighteen-seventies and -eighties, was always to be found on the Dyke Road at Brighton. I believe that he actually lived, at any rate in summer, in one of the copses there. Charlie had no monkey, but on the enlarged musical box that he carried—the gentlest tinkling affair—were little figures on wires that rotated and jigged—those still unbroken—and, with one hand turning the handle and the other holding his hat, while he ducked and bobbed and grinned dazzlingly through his facial jungle, Charlie did exceedingly well. Milton's phrase 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles' exactly describes his method of attack.

Every one knew Charlie—or Old Charlie, as he came to call himself, and more than call, for he had his name painted on his back—and he was especially the friend of the young, for whom he would play without any expectation of reward. Our walks were indeed planned to include his beat. I say that he played for us, but his jigging figures were what we chiefly

valued. With Charlie indeed music was little; personality was all.

This avocation of Old Charlie has led me to search my memory—no unpleasant task—for other of the public characters of Brighton in the eighties—forty and more years before a policeman was perched on a stool in the middle of the King's road; and I will begin with a countryman of Old Charlie and one also bearded with a very frizzy type of hair, although less copiously than the Dyke Road musician—Semadeni of Preston Street, illustrious by reason of his cream-buns. Cream-buns were Alp-like structures of yellow formation, with a snowing of sugar, and, inside, a morass of cloying sweetness. I think they were twopence each; in this ridiculous day, when the fruits of victory are ours, they would be sixpence or even more. Semadeni divided the town by his four syllables, the common folk, of whom I was one, saying Semmer-deeny, and the superior, Say-mardeny.

Among Brighton's many beggars were a couple in appearance so abject, so pitiful, that even if you did not give, you stopped to wonder at them. The man was tall and thin, with (I think) a ruin of a top hat, black clothes, straggly white beard, blear eyes, and a whistle pipe. His wife was very small, very clinging, with an expression of even deeper gloom and hopelessness than his;

and together they drifted along the streets, he walking a little faster than she liked, so that she had the appearance of being dragged after him, occasionally stopping for a tune, during which she looked like all poverty and misery incarnate. Collectively they were known as 'Wheeler's Band'. In public they stood for a Darby and Joan: of incredible worldly failure, but still Darby and Joan; but rumour had it that down side streets they turned on each other with abuse and even assault. In fact there were in plenty eye-witnesses of these engagements. I believe that they could have had all the assistance needful from a well-to-do relation, a tradesman in the town, but they preferred their own life and the malicious satisfaction of forcing him to appear mean. They left, I am told, no small fortune—in fact my informant puts it at £8,000, and says that he read of this sum only a very short while after he had been moved by their pitiful appearance to give them half a crown.

No such worldly gear can have been amassed by the little sharp white-faced old woman, also always in black, with draggled grey locks, whom one would come across in Edward Street and its vicinity, followed by a laughing and jeering crowd. She would be in the middle of the road, now pausing to call back some epithet, now hurrying on with half-wit steps, and then pausing again as

she thought of something better. The mere sight of her always roused the more mischievous instincts of her tormentors, for she was a sure draw. Her public name was Moggy Tealeaves.

I have written elsewhere of the four literary lights of Brighton in the early eighties: Edmund Yates, on his great safe black horse, heavily parading up and down the Front; William Black, his Kemp Town neighbour, with a fiery face behind glittering spectacles; the Hon. Hugh Rowley, a Mephistophelian dude, straight from Tennyson's 'band-box'; and the Hon. Roden Noel, solitary and brooding in his cape. The Hon. Hugh Rowley came down to the Front from Sillwood Place, where he painted fans. I wonder when his two volumes *Puniana* and *More Puniana* were last opened; I have found them the most unreadable books in the world. Later we had, as a resident at the Kemp Town end, George Augustus Sala, looking like a permanent convivial wedding guest; and, in his bath-chair, J. L. Toole, at first crippled only and still cheery, but, as the end approached, failing in his mind.

But my own particular literary hero was the Rev. James Pycraft, author of *The Cricket Field*, and, through his talks with Fennex, the link between Nyren and our own time. I have heard

him compared in appearance with the Duke of Wellington, but I cannot agree. A cloak certainly he wore, but his face was pink and cherubic with a fringe of the whitest whiskers, and not in the least aquiline or ferruginous. At the county ground he never sat down, but hovered by the ring, watching the overs and moving on between them. The groundsman of my time, Burchell by name, looked upon all boys as his foes, yet, underneath a self-protective surliness, he was, I believe, humane enough. Host Juden of the inn, I see clearly, with his big slack body, sleepless features, and long beard, and poor 'Jumper' Juniper, the one-eyed fast bowler, drinking beer with his patrons. We did not ask for autographs in those days; we merely gazed and reverenced. Perhaps the personality that I recall most clearly was 'Stubber'. Stubber's full name was Stubberfield, and he was an old Sussex professional not of the first rank, a tall, wiry man with a little grey beard, who in old age did any odd job, and in time became the factotum of Lord Sheffield, with whom cricket was a passion. I can still see his quick, eager scanning of the loungers at the bar, in hopes of being beckoned.

Chief among others of those far-away Sussex cricketers who come back to visual memory are the Rev. F. F. J. Greenfield (whom I have often

heard singing far from clerically in the pavilion), Jem Lillywhite, with his neat beard and gentle trot up to the wicket; James Phillips, with his curly yellow beard, like a Norse hero's, and his brother, little Harry, also bearded, who crouched behind the stumps until he was their co-equal in height, and once, after a long career of inconspicuous batting, astonished the world and himself by making a hundred against the Australians—or so, writing far from records, I believe. Another hero with a Saxon beard, but less luxuriant than Jem Phillips's, was Jesse Hyde, who when he hit, hit like Hercules, but was too impetuous for big averages.

The scrawny pipings of the Punch and Judy man, mingling with the drum, were a common sound in those days, not only on the Front, but in the side streets; but although the heart beat at the discord, the drama itself never much interested me. More did we desire magic, our favourite conjurer being a bent pock-marked man, with an attendant trudging wife to carry the folding table, who performed, better than I have ever seen since, the trick with the three tins and the little cork balls. There were also two young men who fascinated us by their thought-reading marvels. One remained below bandaged with a red handkerchief; the other moved among the spectators on the parade and asked what articles

he was touching. The answer came pat from his divining partner: 'A hat.' 'A walking-stick.' 'A watch.' 'A baby.' 'And what is the colour of the baby's eyes?' the next question would always be, and the reply, with equal certainty, from the clairvoyant below: 'The colour of the baby's eyes are blew.'

Most of the performers that I recall were to be found west of the pier, for we were not encouraged to penetrate to the east; although occasionally we did so, when a visit to the aquarium was permitted. It was there that I saw two famous conjurers of that distant date—conjurers in evening dress, and thus exalted above the pock-marked wizard of the Front—Dr. Lynn and Dr. Cramer. Why Dr.? To reach them we had to pass the tanks, the two most exciting being that with the anemones at the beginning on the left, and the series on the right, at the bend, where schools of herrings flashed silver as they turned. It was a long walk, rather dreary at night in the half light, and I can still smell it; just as I can still hear the echoing voices of the swimmers in Hudson's Baths, now no more.

On the West Pier itself was Old Doughty, the dog trainer, with his gloomy face, proper, I suppose, in one who claimed to have been a famous clown, and his tractable, if rather mechanical, pack. Far more allure had the huge negro who,

by means of a string, threw little white sticks high over the Norfolk Hotel with such precision that they came back, or nearly back, to him, like boomerangs. With what zeal did the small boys in the audience retrieve them for him! I can see now these tiny wands glistening in the blue as they soared upwards, and the grinning face of the African, made more memorable by the insertion of grotesque false teeth. Near him, at the juncture of noisy, plebeian Brighton and quiet and fastidious Hove, used to stand the Blind Tenor, a little man with an accordion, whose voice was of the sweetest, and around whom the bath-chairs of benevolent old ladies circulated. I have a fancy that another blind performer, whose speciality was whistling, was his brother, but cannot say so definitely. Was their name Bishop? Anyway, they were curiously gifted and must have thrived, the tenor especially. The whistler had not his brother's looks, while the mere mechanics of his art do not make for beauty, but as a melodist he was remarkable and very popular.

Opposite the Grand Hotel, in the vicinity of 'Brandy-Balls', the seller of sweets whose pride was that he resembled Disraeli—in fact he was called 'The Brighton Dizzy'—was the old, blind Bible reader, with his purple face under a cap with ear-flaps, and his thickly-mittened hands

spelling out texts from some earlier form of Braille. Beside him sat his dog with a collecting-box. I remember how I used to marvel at the patience of this faithful animal. One expects that quality from the blind, but not from dogs. Just across the way, below the promenade, was the beach, with its arches: desirable caves of, to the childish vision, not only comfort but luxury, where the fortunate ones of the earth reposed on gaily upholstered couches. As one proceeded eastward, these arches, so sultanic near the West Pier, declined into fisherman's retreats, cheap sweet shops, and drinking saloons, and one of these saloons was dominated by the famous Captain Fred Collins, owner of the *Skylark*, the sailing boat which all day long in the summer made shilling voyages. I can remember both Captain Fred Collins, the white-haired original, and his black-haired son, who in his turn was to occupy the throne. Both wore varnished black straw hats, reefer jackets with brass buttons, and white ducks, thus putting up a determined stage-mariner bluff, but I doubt if they knew much of the sea beyond their shilling radius. The younger one we looked at with a special admiration and awe, because he had once ejected a brawler from his father's bar with such force as to kill him. It was mere manslaughter in the view of the law, but it had its glamour: the Cain touch, even

although on that broad and ruddy countenance was no brand.

At a later date I would pause outside the Old Ship for a more than passing glimpse of Jem Selby, with his white topper, his fair curling hair, and rubicund visage: the famous driver of the four-in-hand between Brighton and London. But more glamorous was another wearer of an unusual top hat—this time a compressed brown one—and a box coat, who was often to be seen chatting in the doorway of that hotel. This was none other than a real live lord—the Marquis of Ailesbury—whose marchioness had dispensed refreshment in the upper-circle bar at the Theatre Royal, and was there known as Dolly Tester.

So much for Old Brighton animate. Far more vividly do I recall, and far more feelingly regret, that beautiful structure of wood and iron, the Chain Pier. A visit to the West Pier was an excitement; but a visit to the Chain Pier was an adventure. It really shook and staggered under heavy waves, while merely to walk along its planks caused it to shiver and sway. At the sea end there was the best fishing, with bait made of dough; at the land end was Snelling's Baazar, with, on special treat-days, the magic of the camera obscura. I still think the camera obscura one of the most fascinating of the toys of science; but how long since I saw one! In calling the

Chain Pier beautiful, I may surprise readers who never saw it. If they would like corroborative testimony, let them hasten to the Tate Gallery, to the room full of Turner's unfinished canvases, where they will find a picture of the Chain Pier so lovely that it brings tears to the eyes.

FATHER AND SON

TO the question 'What did Mr. Gladstone say in 1876?'—the year is a matter of choice—I can supply no answer; but no memory could be clearer than mine as to certain words that failed to emerge from my own lips in 1882.

In 1882, as I was reminded the other evening while following the irregular course of a revue in a London theatre, I was at school in Brighton. It was a curious school, a mixture of boarders and day-boys or, as they were, in the discriminating and careful language of the boarders, more properly called, day-bugs. In fact there were three sections: boarders, about thirty; day-bugs, thirty more; and parlour-boarders, four in number, aloof and superior beings, entitled to mysterious disappearances from routine, to better food than was handed to us and to some of the freedom of the town, which, I hardly need say, they abused. And abused without much risk either, for they were too valuable for expulsion.

Chief of the four, I recollect, was a rich and

spendthrift youth from the North—Manchester, I vaguely fancy—whom even my unformed observation could tell me was being scandalously toaded to and battened upon by one of the junior masters, a Scotchman (who, by the way, robbed me of an early example of a fountain-pen which an uncle had given me). A strange man this Scotchman: an athlete, even a champion at one particular feat of strength, a voluptuary, a martinet in spasms and so profound a sentimentalist that the tears used to run down his cheeks as he read to his class, when he ought to have been observing the curriculum, Ouida's short stories, *A Dog of Flanders*, *A Leaf in the Storm*, and such moving matter, instantly, if the door should open, clapping the true text-book over the false and assuming a pedagogic voice again. Not a good influence for the young.

The second parlour-boarder was a dark silent Greek, reputed to be enormously wealthy, and rightly unpopular, not only for his seclusiveness but on account of certain of his exasperating countrymen, one Xenophon not least. The other two were brothers, the sons of a famous actor who was too busy with the triumphs of his profession to be able to give them much paternal attention, and was therefore glad to hand them over to the care of our Head master and his wife and daughter, with whom, I have a misty notion,

they spent the holidays as well. As for that Head master, there is no need for words of mine to describe him to any one who has read *Vice Versâ* (and is there any one so pitiful as to have not?) Our Head master—a Doctor too—was Mr. Anstey's *Dr. Grimshaw* to the life.

All these are the reminiscences of 1882.

Now, at the revue which I witnessed the other night, forty and more years after my brief sojourn at that school, was a young man capering and singing and filling one part after another in the superficial, semi-charade manner that we associate with this easy and flexible form of beguilement; and gradually I was aware that about this young man—his movements and profile and voice—there was something faintly familiar, something which touched a chord in my brain. Where had I seen before either this young man or another very similar? Where and when? On looking at the programme the mystery was solved, for his name was identical with that of my old school-fellow, the elder of the two parlour-boarders with the Thespian association. Of course! So I was being entertained (more or less) by the son of that tall lean youth with the classical features whose stilted ways and rather too precise and perhaps somewhat affected speech were a source of mirth and mimicry among the ribald. Poor ——, he never quite hit it off with the others;

he was made of more sensitive material than the ordinary barbarian, and he had obviously not mixed much with his kind; but one need not expend too much sympathy on the matter, for parlour-boarders are elect: they receive preferential treatment; and he could always escape to his own sitting-room.

Well, boys can say odd things to each other, and I have no doubt that I was capable of saying odd things myself, but in the course of whatever conversation we had together I am more than sure that in 1882 I said nothing so strange as this: 'My dear ——, I look forward to the time forty and more years hence when I shall see your son performing in revue.'

AUTUMN FRUIT

THE blessed return of the peach and the pear—to me far more precious arrivals than either the oyster or the partridge—leads to some reflections on the more distinguished fruits of the earth, and our national disregard of them either as essentials or delicacies.

One of the first criticisms that our Latin visitors—and often our American visitors—utter bears upon our poverty in the matter of fruit. The automatic presence of dessert on the lunch- and dinner-tables of France and Italy does not exist here, and is missed. And when, in a restaurant, in obedience to an order, it comes, the price is staggering. And yet the odd thing is that, although the ordinary housewife and caterer treat fruit as a luxury, the casual stranger in the busier London streets would assume that we ate it all the time, so many barrows of it would he see; which shows how unsafe it is to generalize. Office boys and office girls bring to fruit a respect that is almost Continental, but it is doubtful

if they carry it into maturer life. As husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, they will probably be as little fruitarian as the rest of the race. They will forget; just as, on returning home, English travellers in France and Italy and Spain forget. While we are abroad how often do we remark, 'Aren't these little grapes a joy!' 'Why on earth can't we be as sensible as these people, and always have fruit?' 'My dear, do let us always have fruit on the table. And real fruit—something beside bananas.' 'Of course, darling.'

But for how long are such good resolutions remembered?

My first taste of pineapple—the true fruit, not the tinned variety, although I am casting no stones at that: at many a meal in a week-end cottage that once I rented has the Delicious Chunk come to our aid—my first taste of pineapple dates from the eighteen-seventies, at a cattle show in Bedfordshire. A man was selling slices at a penny each, and I bought one and thought I had never tasted anything so exquisite. The pineapple still seems to me one of the Creator's happiest thoughts; but as I have enjoyed since then the keenest, rarest gustatory thrill with which the palate can be surprised, it has been displaced from the highest rank. In other words, I have eaten a mangosteen.

To eat a mangosteen it is necessary to go to the East, for the fruit is too delicate to come to us; but no journey could have a nobler pretext. I wonder that the P. and O. do not devote their advertisements exclusively to the description of this enchanted and enchanting growth, except for the reason that no pen could convey its seductive allurement. I ate my mangosteen in Penang. Whatever else that exhausting territory may be famous for—its steam-room atmosphere, its 'lawyers', its Chinamen, its rickshaws, its rubber, or the phosphorescent bubbles in its waters—I think of it as the home of the mangosteen. But, as I have said, only travellers to the East can know this superlative ecstasy, since no cold storage can get the mangosteen here. I was told that it was a grievance with Queen Victoria that, although Empress of India, she had never been enabled to taste one. Perhaps some Lindbergh of the future will arrange that King George's table is more fortunate.

Of my first pear I have no recollection whatever, or of my first strawberry; but the first cherries I ever picked grew in a tree in a deserted orchard in St. Leonard's Forest. That was in 1881. They were white-hearts, and I climbed up and ate until I could eat no more. There were so many that one could reject all except those that the birds had slashed, and still be filled: surely a

condition of well-being that may fairly win the epithet perfect. When I say first pear I mean ordinary pear. My first Comice pear being a more recent discovery, I know all about it: that delectable structure of dissolving sweetness, coolness, and liquefaction. I remember, too, an investigatory uncle bringing the first tomato to our house as a contribution to lunch. He had come from Worthing with the trophy. That was in 1880, and to-day Worthing grows its love-apples, as they are foolishly called, by the milliard, and the London streets are scarlet with them. I thought the novelty detestable, but can now eat them fresh from the stem. Since the tomato, the banana has come to add another note of colour to the London symphony, but I have no recollection of my first. The only yellow fruit in the days when things really tasted good was the orange, absorbed through one aperture with a cube of sugar previously inserted.

My first apples—as juicy spheres with separate names and flavours—I can remember distinctly, partly because there have never been such apples since. They lay on shelves in a shed in the garden of a schoolfellow, and together we used to select them and test them. Hitherto apples had been apples; but these were pippins, Ribston and Cox's, Blenheim oranges, and so forth,

each with its own special fragrance and piquancy. There was a golden-yellow one that I liked best. I realize now that we were thieves, but at the time I did not give the matter much thought. I suppose I was seven or eight. My schoolfellow had an elder brother, I remember, who was bed-ridden with some kind of incurable malady, hip-disease, I believe, and who first had to be visited for a little while. He was white and wistful, tired of an existence the only excitement of which was practice at a target on the opposite wall with an air-gun; a monotony made less bearable by the sound of our gay activities outside. (I remember how, by some strange perverted reasoning, I thought how doubly wrong it was for one so ill ever to be short-tempered; just as I nourished the conviction, as a child, that every one who wore spectacles should be virtuous.) Having chatted a little while with the invalid, and, I suppose, drugged our consciences, we hurried off to rob the apple store. Stolen fruit must indeed taste sweetest, for there are no such apples now when I can afford to ransack Covent Garden.

A fair neighbour at dinner, with whom I was discussing the peach-fed hams of Virginia, offered me a still more exotic delicacy, a ham-fed peach. Having a just mind, and deeming some give-and-

take to be due, she had planted two slices of ham among the roots of a peach tree against her sunniest wall, and I have promised to visit her next autumn and examine the flavour of its progeny. Meanwhile, I have been trying to recall the first time I ate a peach and was conscious of that indescribable quality; but in vain: I have no data. And yet I ought to have some, for in my early days, which had no glass-houses within them, it would have been an event.

I can remember, however, with vividness and shame, an occasion when I did not eat my first peach, and that was when I was led round a nursery garden of wide extent and world-wide fame by one of its proprietors; and though the time was September, and the conservatories were laden, and I was eleven years old (that chronically consuming age), not one product of vine or tree was offered to me. These are the paltrinesses that stick. Whenever I see a reference to this firm, memories of that empty day come rushing back upon me: the frustration and the squalor of it! Want of imagination was the cause, no doubt, as it is the cause of so many blunders, but to explain is not necessarily to exonerate. Had I that day been treated as a human boy I might be a better man, for the moulding of character is not solely the affair of school and

church. Any one who likes may contribute to the structure, even a nursery-gardener of great wealth.

There are probably many lyrical passages in English literature in praise of the peach, but only one comes to memory as I write, and that is an old favourite of mine: Austin Dobson's 'Garden Idyll'. It will be recollected by those who know the work of that accomplished and graceful hand, which touched nothing that it did not adorn, that he reports a dialogue between a hostess and a poet. The poet had been wandering and pondering in the garden, and the lady asks him what great thoughts were his. What masterpiece was he planning? You know how hostesses talk. Then he tells her: he had no masterpiece in mind; the sight of her fruit wall had reminded him of his own childhood and the tragic day on which he had been caught stealing peaches. There were three, and he had eaten two before he took fright and ran. Retribution followed, and he was punished. It was the memory of that early depredation which had been occupying his mind, he tells the lady; and this is the final verse:—

> I saw it all but now. The grin
> That gnarled old gardener Sandy's features;
> My father, scholar-like and thin,
> Unroused, the tenderest of creatures;

I saw—ah me—I saw again
My dear and deprecating mother;
And then remembering the cane,
Regretted—that *I'd left the Other.*

Life is full of such regrets.

TWO MORE COINCIDENCES

ALTHOUGH the eminent professor of literature under whom I was wont to sit was persistent in forbidding his students to refer to 'coincidences', yet, with the deepest reverence for his authority, I must confess that the word is a useful one now and then, and there seems to be no other. The following two cases could, for example, be described by employing a number of terms and expressions proper to the vocabulary of the adventuring psychological mind; but it would be idle to deny that if 'coincidence' means anything, which my instructor firmly denied (and no one could compress his lips more decisively and indeed finally than W. P. K.), it has that meaning here. 'A notable concurrence of events suggestive of, but not having causal connexion'—is what the dictionary says; and my two true stories support that definition perfectly. They lose nothing by having the same heroine and both being concerned with jewellery.

When this lady was a girl she was given a

brooch with '1887' on it, set with little diamonds, one of which soon dropped out of the '7' and was not replaced. This brooch she left behind on leaving a friend's house in Hertfordshire, and on writing to reclaim it she was told that it could not be found, and she thus had every reason to suppose that it was stolen by a servant. It passed from her memory for several years, until one day she was in a shop in Henley making a purchase of brown ribbon, when she noticed that the attendant was wearing a brooch whose odd design—1887—was familiar, this familiarity not being decreased by the circumstance that one stone was missing from the '7'. Indeed, there was no doubt; it was the actual lost article. The girl, on being asked, said that her grandmother had picked it up in the road on Gravel Hill some years before, and had given it to her the previous week. Its true ownership being established to the girl's satisfaction, my friend took her to the nearest jeweller's and gave her the sum at which he valued it: four pounds, ten shillings, which seemed to the girl as much more desirable than the diamonds as a virtuous wife is than rubies; or so says Solomon, who had experience.

The oddness of that case is that the owner of the brooch lost in Hertfordshire should, several years later, have chanced in Oxfordshire upon

the one person in the world who could help to its recovery. But for needing a piece of brown ribbon she would probably never have joined up with it again. The special function of the coincidence seems, indeed, to be to give the lie to Browning's phrase, 'Never the time and the place'.

Now for the second experience. The same lady was one day in an auctioneer's rooms in New Bond Street, looking at a jewel-box and its contents, which, according to the label, were to be disposed of by the order of a Scottish law lord. A family had found itself in difficulties and the Court had sanctioned or even decreed the sale. Among the rings was one which my friend liked, an old wedding-ring, together with a keeper and a bunch of charms—emblems of Faith, Hope, and Charity—and she bought it and wore it. Some years afterwards she was visiting in one of the islands off the west coast of Scotland—I forget which, but it was the kind of island that you cannot get to without the often exceedingly uncomfortable assistance of David MacBrayne—and one afternoon came a caller who in the course of conversation mentioned that she had never ceased to regret that the financial follies of her father had led them into such trouble that the family jewellery had had to be sold, among it being her mother's wedding-

ring. 'Surely there was no need to sell that'; 'Certain things might always be held back as sacred'; and so forth.

Asked to describe it, she minutely did so, adding that nothing would give her more happiness than its restoration.

'Then,' said my friend, drawing it from her finger, 'please take it.'

Those who like to think that we are guided hither and thither by something greater than ourselves will see the hand of Fate in this conjunction; others will think it merely a very remarkable occurrence.

Coincidences of a character as striking as these have never happened to me, but I am frequently being oddly forewarned of the imminence of friends or acquaintances by seeing in the street some one so like them that, for a moment, I think they are they. Then, not long after, up rolls Simon Pure. And, of course, every one can give an instance of the almost inevitable appearance in print or conversation of a new word very shortly after one has heard it for the first time.

One of the oddest literary coincidences that I remember was told me by the late William Hyde, the artist, that sincere and impassioned student of nature, whose line and wash drawings of placid and sombre landscape are treasured by

all who possess them. When he first came to London, he said, he lodged in Westminster, and on the first night of his stay there, on reaching home very late, he found at his door a stranger who had been taken ill and was lying unconscious on the top step. Wondering whether or no this might be a fellow-lodger, Mr. Hyde rang the bell to find out.

'Why, it's Dr. Jekyll,' said the servant; 'he lives here, poor gentleman.'

THE SECOND KIPPER

IT was while I was casting about for a sentiment that might bear upon the New Year then beginning, that an American friend, mentioning the second kipper, gave me my cue. 'No,' he replied, after I had expressed a wish that a certain guest whom we had jointly entertained, and who had been most admirable company, should be asked again. 'No! Let it go at that. There's too much risk of the second kipper.'

'Meaning?' I inquired.

'Referring,' he replied, 'to my experience every time I reach England from New York. My first breakfast is always kippers. I eat one —divine! divine! So divine that, although I know better, I take another; and that other, without any kind of exception, is always inferior.'

Suppressing the impulse to refer to first fine foolish raptures, I waited for more.

'Well,' he said, 'the rule for the second kipper runs through life. I never expect the same inspirations twice.'

Had we not decided in this way—had not the doctrine of the second kipper prevailed—what a disappointment would have been ours! Inevitably or almost inevitably; for that which is most eagerly looked forward to is most certain to disenchant. There would have been the dinner-table, the shaded lights, the ice pail, all the right accessories; there would have been our guest, on occasion so witty, so mischievous (I will not divulge her name, but you have read her books); there would have been my friend and I, prepared and eager, in both senses of the phrase, alimentary and theatrical, to 'feed her'; but the evening would fail. We should have expected too much. Why is this? Why should it be a fixed metallic fact that the same enjoyments cannot be repeated, even when all the conditions seem to be identical; that the anticipation of much joy, much fun, is doomed to frustration?

Now and then I suppose one has oneself exclaimed, or has heard others exclaim, 'Even better than the last.' But how seldom!

It would be interesting to know why it is that our anticipations of happiness are nearly always falsified. They might just as easily be right. When the world was being planned, it was as simple to say, 'Let their hopes be realized,' as to decree frustration. But what happens?

You read in the press notices that your favourite actress is marvellous in her new play, and you take seats confident of a good time. You do yourself very well at dinner so that the chances of misadventure may be reduced to a minimum (and who can do more than this?), and you wait serenely content for the curtain to rise. And then? Well, the performance drags on to the end, and you laugh not at all.

Another time you are invited to a house where you are sure you will have a pleasant evening, and it is three hours of boredom. Why is this?

There are those who say that the fault is in ourselves. Everything is the same, but we are out of tune. I cannot subscribe to this theory. My desire to be amused, to be gay, has been too deep and genuine for any antagonism within me to rob me of the longed-for reward. No, the actress was insipid because she was in a poor play; the dinner failed because the guests were dull.

This inability to anticipate pleasure without disappointment would be intolerable if it were not that the blessed law of compensation comes in to arrange that when we profoundly dread something that is hanging over us, the realization is so often an agreeable surprise. You go to the dentist's in an agony of misgiving that has robbed you of sleep and peace; and he does nothing that produces even a twinge. You accept against

your better judgment an invitation to dinner, you spend the intervening time in regret and self-reproaches, and even while you are dressing for it you are half-inclined to ring up to say you have suddenly been taken ill; you go and enjoy every moment of it, the company on each side of you, the food, the wine, even the barristers who push the decanter.

Again, stranded in a provincial town, you are at your wits' end to fill up the evening. With nothing but dark foreboding in your heart you drop into the theatre or music-hall, and are delighted. You agree with reluctance to join a picnic party, conscious that your lot will comprise wasps, flies, ants, intense weariness and a chill; and you find yourself regretting the shortness of the day.

These examples might be multiplied to include that other visit to the dentist when you are confident that nothing really serious is going to happen, and you spend half an hour in torture while a live nerve is being quietened in vain.

The falsification of anticipation is indeed the rule of life, but—and here is another perplexity—it is not such a rule of life that you can rely on it. If you could, I should offer it as a scheme for the New Year. I should urge you to safeguard the future, to make sure that your feet were always on the middle way of safety, by continually

repeating these words—or, if not continually, for as long a time as any revised rule of life survives in a New Year: 'I know I am going to be miserable, therefore I shall be happy'; 'I know I am going to be happy, therefore I shall be miserable.'

But unfortunately it cannot be; there is no fixed line. They, as somebody in one of George Eliot's stories always referred to the Omnipotent —They wouldn't allow that. That would be too simple.

And so has come about the new beatitude which facetious people too often quote, but which may perhaps be as sound a motto as any: 'Blessed is he who expecteth nothing, for he shall not be disappointed.'

'POOR DICK'

FEW painters give me more pleasure than Richard Wilson; that mood of tender quietude which he loved in a landscape and so graciously caught is, I think, the most livable-with in art.

The style is the man and Wilson's work is doubtless the reflection of his own fine inner character and nature; but it is curiously at variance with the superficial Wilson of the biographers, who make him surly, uncouth, not too sober, and a grumbler with a constant grievance. In his pictures we find only placidity, a sweet content, and a golden lambency; but in his life——

The reason for this discontent of 'Poor Dick', as Wilson was called, is to be sought largely in his want of financial success and a certain unsociability in the presence of more prosperous and glibber men. On the top he was seldom gracious or easy. His portrait of David Garrick recalls Mrs. Garrick's saying about him, to that effect. 'Mr. Wilson,' she said, 'is rough to the taste at first, tolerable by a little longer acquaintance, and

delightful at last.' This is an epitaph worth cutting in stone; but one easily gathers from it that its subject might be unpopular, so few people having time or patience or enough imagination to pass on from the rough stage to the tolerable, or from the tolerable to the delightful.

Richard Wilson, who has been dead for more than one hundred and forty years, was born in Montgomeryshire in 1714, the son of a clergyman. He was well educated at home, and then put to a portrait painter to learn his mystery. At the age of thirty-five he went to Italy, still a portrait painter of some note but no fame, and there, the story is, his exact contemporary, Claude Joseph Vernet, the French landscape painter, seeing an experiment of Wilson's in the same genre, urged him to go over to landscape altogether, while Francesco Zuccarelli gave him in Venice similar advice. Vernet was more than friendly: he was quixotic; for when people praised his pictures he would say, 'Ah, but you should see Wilson's'. Zuccarelli, on the contrary, settled in England and became so much the rage as to cut Wilson out; but I doubt if we can blame him. The taste of the moment is often wrong, and many good judges were a long time in coming round to 'Poor Dick', who, indeed, like many another artist, had to die first.

In his lifetime he was pursued by ill-luck.

He was even so unlucky as to fall foul both of George III, who fancied himself as a patron of artists, and of Sir Joshua Reynolds, his President. The result was that he became something of an Ishmael and took to the dangerous practices of drinking too much porter and saying what he thought. When Gainsborough's health as 'the best landscape painter' was proposed in Sir Joshua's presence, Wilson added, audibly enough to pierce the famous ear-trumpet, 'and the best portrait painter, too'. In later years Wilson was often without a penny, and but for his appointment to the librarianship of the R.A. in 1776, and a small legacy, he would have died a pauper. It is strange—it is impossible to realize —seeing his pictures to-day, that these beautiful things were allowed to go unsold or had to be nearly given away. One critic, however, had prescience. Dr. John Wolcot, known better as 'Peter Pindar', in one of his Odes to the Royal Academicians, printed in 1782, told 'Honest Wilson' not to mind, assuring him of renown 'when he had been dead a hundred years'.

Among Wilson's pupils was Farington of the Diary, and in that Diary one finds some interesting entries concerning him. Thus, on July 15th, 1794, twelve years after Wilson's death, Vandergucht, the dealer, told Farington that Wilson's pictures were getting into great request at com-

paratively high prices, while Gainsborough's were decreasing in value. (As it chanced, it was one of Vandergucht's last utterances, for a few weeks later he was drowned in crossing the Thames at Chiswick, when a barge upset his boat.) Twelve years later, on May 17th, 1806, Seguier, the picture-cleaner and dealer, spoke of 'the great rise in the price of Wilson's pictures'. On May 31st Sir George Beaumont wished a 'View of Rome' by Wilson to be exhibited 'as a corrector of the present bad taste'. I have seen several views of Rome by Wilson, but which was referred to by Sir George I cannot say. One of them, 'Rome from the Janicula', has touches in it that both Chardin and Hogarth might envy.

On April 28th, 1807, Farington went with Sir George and Lady Beaumont and Wordsworth to see a Wilson, and Sir George proposed 100 guineas as a fair price. The theme is not mentioned, but obviously there was a historical suggestion in it, for Wordsworth (who was always true to type) delivered himself upon it in these impressive terms: 'He thought Historical subjects should never be introduced into Landscape, but where the Landscape was to be subservient to them. Where the Landscape was intended principally to impress the mind, figures, other than such as are general, such as may a thousand times appear, and seem accidental, and not par-

ticularly to draw the attention, are injurious to the effect which the Landscape shall produce as a scene founded on an observation of nature. He thought the picture by Wilson excellent, but objected to the foreground dark trees on the left. . . .' I wish we knew what picture this was. Standing before it, I should like to reconstruct the Lake Poet laying down the law.

One of Wilson's greatest admirers among artists was Corot. Another of his admirers was Hoppner, who remarked to Farington on October 8th, 1803, that 'Poor Dick' painted actual 'daylight'; he had 'never seen green upon blue managed with so good effect'. Hoppner, three years later, on June 2nd, 1806, said to Farington that, 'considering the qualities of Claude and Wilson as he should those of two fine Women, he should acknowledge the beauties of Claude, but say Wilson was a piece of more relish'. I like that form of criticism, but fancy that it might be unwise to cultivate it overmuch.

A MODEL COLLECTOR

IT is well known that good pictures, when their owners don't leave them to the British nation, go to America; and during my visits to that country I have seen many. The spectacle did not fill me with rage. Knowing something of our own treasures—of the pictures that are always on view in, and can never leave the custody of, the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, the Wallace Collection, the Glasgow Gallery, the Edinburgh Gallery, and so forth—I felt none of the resentment which is so often expressed that the dollar should be so powerful at Christie's, although I am in favour of restricting the export of works of art. Not only is the presence of these beautiful and irreplaceable things an æsthetic influence in the country, but the foreigner, weary of less beautiful and easily replaceable things, can refresh himself among them. In the presence of Rembrandts and Hobbemas, Reynoldses and Gainsboroughs, Monets and Sisleys, Constables and Corots, it is possible to forget.

I have named only Dutch, English and French

painters, because it is they that are most evident. A few of the choicest examples of the Italian Old Masters are in America too, but they are infrequent. Mr. Widener, for instance, in his mansion at Lynewood, outside Philadelphia, has a Giovanni Bellini, 'The Feast of the Gods', the value of which could not be appraised. He has also the small 'Cowper' Raphael 'Madonna' and the 'Spilimbergo Sisters—Emilie and Irene', by Titian; but I suppose that this unrivalled private collection is chiefly famous for its Rembrandts and Vermeers. Mr. Andrew Mellon has the best Raeburns I have ever seen in one room. A recent enthusiasm for El Greco has manifestations in many unexpected places, and at Chicago are many Goyas. Taking the American galleries, public and private, as a whole, the impression conveyed is that the great Dutchmen of the seventeenth century, the great Englishmen of the eighteenth and the great Frenchmen of the nineteenth have long stood first in the affections of American collectors.

All this is by way of introduction to the most interesting and original American collector of all, Mr. Ellery Flood, upon whom I had the pleasure of calling in Memphis. How Mr. Flood made his fortune I did not ascertain, but that he is a very rich man is obvious. Dry goods, perhaps; hardware, perhaps; for no one seems to be able

SECOND THOUGHTS AND THIRD

A SUBSCRIPTION list for a very hard and deserving case was being passed round the table and my neighbour produced her half-crown. 'Although,' she said, 'if I had any aptitude for learning lessons I shouldn't give a penny.'

I asked her to explain.

'Well,' she said, 'it had always been my habit, unless I was in a dreadful hurry, to find something for beggars. I'm so sorry for them. Until the other evening there came to dine at our house a famous organizer, who upset all my easy impulses.

'The conversation turned naturally on charity; it was a theme with which his name was associated—as naturally as——'

'Fortnum with Mason,' I suggested.

'Yes,' she said gratefully.

'Or tare with tret.'

'Yes. Thank you. So the whole question of charity came up—charity in all its branches; so many branches that one almost lost sight of the thing itself among the leaves.'

'Very good,' I said.

'Was I being funny?' she asked. 'I hope not. I hate women who are funny.'

'Merely apt,' I assured her. 'But do go on.'

'Well,' she resumed, 'we all talked charity, and gradually the great organizer convinced those of us who were in the habit of finding sixpences and shillings for mendicants that we were, if not actual criminals, enemies of society. There is no such mischief, he assured us, as indiscriminate giving of alms. The truly deserving suffer at the hands of the impostors. Every appeal should be investigated first. And so on. You no doubt have heard it too?'

'Often,' I said. 'But life isn't long enough. Let those who have nothing else to do pursue the necessary inquiries.'

'Yes,' she replied, 'that is what I think now. But I must admit that this eminent public man rather impressed me. He repeated so often and so earnestly that we must all do our duty that I determined to try. I would no longer be impulsive. I would institute inquiries (I am using his words); I would plumb the depths.

'As it chanced, I had an opportunity of behaving like a scientific Samaritan almost at once, for only a day or so afterwards, just as I turned out of Notting Hill Gate into the Mall, I was stopped by the most wistful and forlorn little creature I

have ever seen. A child of not more than thirteen, pale, tearful and in rags. Would the kind lady help? she asked. Her mother was very ill and there was no food in the house.

'Where was her father?

'Dead.

'Why wasn't her mother in a hospital?

'She was too ill to be moved.

'What was the complaint?

'Pneumonia.

'I was just about to open my purse when I remembered my responsibilities as a citizen, my position as a member of the social family.

' "Where does your mother live?" I asked, and learned that it was in a tenement building not very distant.

' "Then I'll go with you and see what can be done," I said. "You lead the way."

'It occurred to me that the child did not receive this very handsome offer with much enthusiasm; in fact her sad little face grew sadder, with a shade of alarm swiftly crossing it; but I was too well pleased with myself for thinking of my duty to pay very much attention. It was later that the full significance of her expression struck me.

' "Lead on," I said, making what conversation I could as we walked.

'Our first steps had been brisk, but after a few yards the child's feet began to lag and her general

air was marked by irresolution. A few moments later she stopped altogether.

'"Well," I said, "what is it?"

'She hesitated and looked down.

'"Tell me," I said encouragingly, taking her hand, for I felt miserably sorry for her, so young and so down-and-out.

'"Please, Ma'am, have you any children?" she asked.

'"Yes," I said, "three little girls. But why?"

'"I was thinking before you come home with me you ought to know what mother's other disease is," she said.

'"Other disease!" I exclaimed. "Has she got something then besides pneumonia?"

'"Oh, yes," the child replied; "small-pox."

'I am naturally unsuspicious and believe what I hear; but at this point I became doubtful.

'"Oh," I said brightly, "that's all right. I don't mind about small-pox a bit."

'She stopped and looked at me with dilated eyes. I had broken the rules of the game. I saw her thinking hard. "And Mrs. Jones, who has the room next to ours," she resumed breathlessly—"Mrs. Jones said this morning, Ma'am, that she thought Mother was sickening for the yellow fever too—yes, and cholera."

'At that I had to give in. "Ah!" I said, "in that case I think I won't come any farther with

you." We were opposite a pastrycook's. "It's terrible for you," I continued. "Come in here and choose the kind of things you like the best;" and I left her with a sausage-roll in one hand and a custard cornucopia in the other.'

'That was very unmoral of you,' I said. 'You were encouraging both mendacity and mendicity at one blow.'

'At any rate,' she replied, 'the mother didn't get it.'

MURDERS AND MOTIVES

WE were talking about the woful condition of country-house parties when the weather is bad and conversation flags. For if it has been too wet for golf, how can a man relate the misadventures that beset him at the fifth hole or his triumphs at the seventh? Bridge, of course, is useful between meals, but at meals there can be serious silences, particularly among those whose luck is out.

'Let me tell you', said little Mrs. ffolliott, 'of a scheme that I invented. You may all have it if you like. It's perfect. Last year we had a party in Scotland and it rained all the time, as one might have expected. Indeed, as I did expect, and that is why I took such pains to make it a success.'

She paused to give someone the opportunity of saying earnestly, 'Do tell us.'

As a matter of fact we all said it.

Little Mrs. ffolliott composed herself happily to hold the floor.

'Just before leaving for Scotland', she said, 'I

went to the booksellers' and asked what was the very latest detective novel. They showed me several old ones. "No," I said, "I don't mean these; I have read these. I want one that was published yesterday or won't be published till to-morrow—absolutely new;" and at last they found one. It was not to be on sale till two days later, but they let me have a dozen copies. I remember the title and the author perfectly, although it was last year: *The Mystery of Grewsam Grange*, by Avery Cross Traylor.'

'I've read that,' said half a dozen voices at once.

'Of course you have,' said Mrs. ffolliott, 'but the point is that no one had read it then.'

'Isn't that the story', asked the bishop, 'in which the murderer turns out to be the maiden aunt?'

'That's the one!' we exclaimed.

'It seemed to me', said the bishop, 'highly improbable: more than improbable, unfair. There was no motive, and a motive there must be. My theory is that murderers should be murderers, whereas this estimable lady would never have hurt a fly. I doubt if it is playing the game to make the guilty person a fundamentally innocuous one like that, just to put readers off the scent.'

'True,' said Mrs. ffolliott, who was getting a

little restive under this interruption, 'but if readers weren't put off the scent there would be very little in my scheme, and that's why *The Mystery of Grewsam Grange* was so useful. You see, this is what I did: I had those twelve copies cut up into chapters, and each chapter separately bound and lettered; and, having discovered that none of my guests had read the book—except one meek little man, and I swore him to secrecy—I distributed Chapter I on the day of their arrival, with injunctions that it was to be read before dinner. Read; no skipping. What was the result? As they all had the same absorbing topic of conversation, dinner was one long and successful clash or harmony of theories as to the probable course of events.'

Mrs. ffolliott paused for praise and got it.

'When they went to bed', she continued, 'they found Chapter II in their rooms. And so on through the week; the sections were carefully distributed. I kept them myself under lock and key, and such was the excitement that I had to hide the key for fear of theft. The man who had read the story in London was so pestered for private information that he arranged for a telegram to be sent to himself and left. Everybody joined in; even Percy, who has never been known to read anything but *The Times*. But', added little Mrs. ffolliott, 'it's astonishing how,

when you come to detective stories, the dullest men, City men, shooting men, even hunting men, can display literary taste.'

A murmur of doubt, led by the bishop, ran round the company.

'Well, at any rate,' Mrs. ffolliott amended, 'curiosity concerning the printed word.'

'Better,' said the bishop approvingly.

'You never heard such a rattle as we used to have at lunch and dinner,' Mrs. ffolliott resumed; 'and I don't know what the servants would have thought if they had not known about it, for there was nothing but murders and motives all the time. But as a matter of fact the butler was playing too, for it seems that my maid gave him one of the extra copies.'

'Did many of your guests guess the guilty party?' the bishop inquired.

'Oh, yes; two or three. But only, I think, out of perversity. They agreed with you', said little Mrs. ffolliott, 'that to make it the maiden aunt was not quite the thing.'

'Indeed no,' said the bishop, 'most reprehensible.'

'I was sorry for the little man who had to leave,' Mrs. ffolliott went on. 'The perfect way, of course, would be to get one of the swell authors to write one a special story—Conan Doyle or Austin Freeman or J. W. Crofts or Edgar Wallace

or Father Knox or Mrs. Christie—and then there would be no possible chance of anyone knowing the end. But only a millionaire could do that.'

'No need to buy the work completely,' I suggested. 'You could acquire merely the country-house rights.'

'I didn't know there were such things,' said Mrs. ffolliott.

'Nor I,' I replied; 'but I don't see why there shouldn't be. It would be an additional source of income for necessitous novelists.'

The bishop rose. 'I am afraid I must be going,' he said. 'Of course you all know the earliest form of detective story? No? You will find it in the Apocrypha—the story of Susanna and the Elders; its hero, Daniel, was the first detective.'

THE INVERSE RATIO

THE notice of the death, on his yacht at Monte Carlo, of Sir William Bullion, the millionaire, reminds me of a curious trait in the character of self-made magnates.

I met him only four times in all, in the way that one does meet certain persons in London, never getting to know them any better and often having to be re-introduced; and each time, I remember, he talked about his early days, but on each occasion with a difference.

When I met him first he was only beginning to be a financial notability.

'You're all public-school and university men here,' he said, looking round the table, 'and therefore to be envied. Now, my father sent me to a private school and put me into business directly I left. What I missed by not doing as you did I shall never know, even though my wits may perhaps have been sharpened.'

Considering that he already had a hundred pounds to every ten of ours he had the right to his complacency.

'You're all public-school and university men here,' he said—this is my recollection of the second time I was in his presence, again at a men's dinner-party, and he was now the chairman of a score of companies—'and therefore to be envied. Now, my father held that the world was the best training ground, and so I was taken away at an early age from the very elementary school that he could afford, and put into life itself, without any outside leverage whatever, indeed nothing except possibly a certain quickness and plenty of driving power. And yet I have not perhaps done so badly. . . .'

The third occasion was one of those charity banquets where every guest's appetite is impaired by the contiguity of a fountain-pen and a banker's order. Sir William Bullion—he had just been knighted—made one of the speeches.

'Most of the gentlemen around me', he said, 'have had the advantage of a public-school and university education. I don't say it boastfully, but I had practically no education at all, and'—he added—'very little to eat. (Laughter.) How I contrived to learn to speak grammar I have now no notion; perhaps a certain ability to pick things up stood my friend . . .' It was like a chapter from Smiles's *Self-Help* on the cinema.

On the last occasion I chanced to be placed next to him, and I congratulated him on the

baronetcy that had just been conferred. He thanked me with tears in his eyes, and with more tears went on to tell me how proud his parents would have been could they know of it. 'Poor creatures,' he said, 'they could not even afford to give me schooling. For the first fifteen years of my life I was literally in the gutter.'

SEQUELS

THE tendency of several new plays that I have seen, and novels that I have read, to end with the beginning of the real problems of life—that is with weddings—has caused me again to ponder on the general wastefulness of our creative artists in words. They lift the veil for so short a time and then, dropping it, have done for ever with the people in whom they have made us interested. Is that fair? Even more, is it sound economy?

Of course, it is no discovery of mine that plays should sometimes be written in series; and the idea has, indeed, been toyed with, both humorously and seriously. Many suggested extra acts to well-known dramas have been composed. Did not St. John Hankin bring his ingenuity to bear on these puzzles? And Mr. Anstey Guthrie? I seem to remember more than one effort to record the events following upon Nora's final banging of the door in 'A Doll's House'. And I suppose it is true that except where all the dramatis personae, or, at any rate, all the principals, are

neatly disposed of by murder or suicide, every play leaves a few loose strings; but these the audience can tie for themselves. But how often one wants to know more! how often the curtain falls just when it ought to rise!

There is, of course, before the authors the spectre of the sequel destined by general consent always to fail. Why this disaster is so consistently foredoomed I have never understood. Why an author having invented a good character or a good series of characters should so seldom be able to carry them successfully into a second story is one of the mysteries. When it comes to episodes, the task seems to be easy enough. Look at Mr. Jacobs' delectable reintroductions of the Night Watchman and Old Sam and Bob Cherry; look at Mr. Kipling's Soldiers Three; look at Sir Gilbert Parker's Pierre, and Bret Harte's Jack Hamlin, and at all the great detective fiction, from Gaboriau, with Lecoq, to Mr. Austin Freeman, with his medical criminologist Dr. Thorndyke, and Mr. Chesterton with Father Brown, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with one who no longer need be named. It would seem almost as if the same character were an assistance to these episodic authors; whereas the long novel that resumes the history of old friends is a stumbling-block. The reason does not jump to the mind. Is it because each novel is thought out

as a complete and sufficing thing? Is it that the novelist tires of his puppets and must have new or he would faint by the way? Trollope didn't, but Trollope is perhaps the exception in the past that proves the rule, and Mr. Galsworthy with his Forsyths the exception among the living.

If any great writer could continue to extract meat from his creations it would be, you would say, Dickens, although the joys of creation must have been to him more of an excitement than to most authors, and more also of a reward. That perhaps was why he was always beginning afresh. But when he did attempt a revival the results were almost deplorable. You would think that Sam Weller and his father were practically proof against deterioration; I mean in the hands of their owner, not of the egregious G. W. M. Reynolds, who dared to continue 'Pickwick'. But no. In Mr. Weller's and Sam Weller's later appearances in 'Master Humphrey's Clock', in the interludes of conversation between the stories, they are almost pathetic shadows of their true selves. The two most famous contributions to their own canon of philosophy made by father and son are Mr. Weller's denunciation of railways and Sam's narratives of the two barbers, the young and susceptible one who fell in love with one of his wax models, and the older one who kept bears in the cellar from which to extract grease. I make no

apologies for enriching my own anaemic pages with Mr. Weller's red-corpuscular manner:

'Here's the story,' said Sam. 'Vunce upon a time there wos a young hairdresser as opened a wery smart little shop vith four wax dummies in the winder, two gen'lmen and two ladies—the gen'lmen vith dots for their beards, wery large viskers, oudacious heads of hair, uncommon clear eyes, and nostrils of amazin' pinkness; the ladies vith their heads o' one side, their right forefingers on their lips, and their forms deweloped beautiful, in vich last respect they had the adwantage over the gen'lmen, as wasn't allowed but werry little shoulder, and terminated rather abrupt in fancy drapery. He had also a many hair-brushes and tooth-brushes bottled up in the winder, neat glass-cases on the counter, a floor-clothed cuttin'-room up-stairs, and a weighin' macheen in the shop, right opposite the door.

'But the great attraction and ornament wos the dummies, which this here young hairdresser wos constantly a runnin' out in the road to look at, and constantly a runnin' in agin to touch up and polish; in short, he wos so proud on 'em, that ven Sunday came, he wos always wretched and mis'rable to think they wos behind the shutters, and looked anxiously for Monday on that account. Vun o' these dummies wos a fav'rite vith him beyond the others; and ven any of his acquaintance asked him wy he didn't get married—as the young ladies he know'd in partickler often did—he used to say, Never! "I never vill enter into the bonds of vedlock", he says, "until I meet vith a young 'ooman as realizes my idea o' that 'ere fairest dummy vith the light hair."

'All the young ladies he know'd as had got dark hair told him this wos wery sinful, and that he was wurshippin' a idle; but them as wos at all near the same shade as the dummy coloured up wery much, and wos observed to think him a wery nice young man.'

"Samivel," said Mr. Weller, gravely, "a member o' this associashun bein' one o' that 'ere tender sex which is now immedetly referred to, I have to rekvest that you vill make no reflections."

'I ain't a makin' any, am I?' inquired Sam.

"Order, sir!" rejoined Mr. Weller, with severe dignity. Then sinking the chairman in the father, he added in his usual tone: "Samivel, drive on!"

'The young hairdresser hadn't been in the habit o' makin' this avowal above six months, ven he encountered a young lady as wos the wery picter o' the fairest dummy. "Now", he says, "it's all up. I am a slave!" The young lady wos not only the picter o' the fairest dummy, but she was wery romantic, as the young hairdresser was too, and he says, "O!" he says, "here's a community o' feelin', here's a flow o' soul!" he says, "here's a interchange o' sentiment." The young lady didn't say much o' course, but she expressed herself agreeable, and shortly artervards vent to see him vith a mutual friend.

'The hairdresser rushes out to meet her, but d'rectly she sees the dummies she changes colour and falls a tremblin' wiolently. "Look up, my love," says the hairdresser, "behold your imige in my winder, but not correcter than in my art!" "My imige!" she says. "Yourn!" replies the hairdresser. "But whose imige is that?" she says, a pinting at vun o' the gen'lmen, "No vun's, my love," he says, "it is but a idea." "A idea!" she cries, "it is a portrait, I feel it is a portrait, and that 'ere noble face must be in the millingtary." "Wot do I hear!" says he, a crumplin' his curls. "Villiam Gibbs," she says, quite firm, "never renoo the subject. I respect you as a friend", she says, "but my affections is set upon that manly brow." "This", says the hairdresser, "is a reg'lar blight, and in it I perceive the hand of Fate. Farevell!" Vith these words he rushes into the shop, breaks the dummy's nose vith a blow of his curlin'-irons, melts him down at the parlour fire, and never smiles artervards.

'As for the young lady,' Sam continued, 'finding that Fate had a spite agin her and everybody she come into contact vith, she never smiled neither, but read a deal o' poetry and pined avay,—by rayther slow degrees, for she ain't dead yet. It took a deal o' poetry to kill the hairdresser, and some people say arter all that it was more the gin and water as caused him to be run over; p'raps it was a little o' both and came o' mixing the two.'

But the sequel to 'Pickwick' must be forgiven for the sake of the introduction of Sam's family. Two sons are his—or, rather, two grandsons are Mr. Anthony Weller's—at the end of the book, Tony and Sam, and I hardly need inform any readers of Dickens that another child is expected. Tony is full of mischief and mimicry that delight the old man, although he pretends to be shocked. Here is his contribution to the art of being a grandfather:

That 'ere Tony is the blessedest boy as ever I see in my days! Of all the charmin'est infants as ever I heerd tell on, includin' them as was kivered over by the robin red-breasts arter they'd committed sooicide with blackberries, there never wos any like that 'ere little Tony. He's always a playin' vith a quart pot, that boy is! To see him a settin' down on the door-step pretending to drink out of it, and fetching a long breath artervards, and smoking a bit of firewood and sayin', 'Now I'm grandfather,'—to see him a doin' that at two year old is better than any play as wos ever wrote. 'Now I'm grandfather!' He wouldn't take a pint pot if you was to make him a present on it, but he gets his quart, and then he says, 'Now I'm grandfather.'

And again:

'I've offered my son Samivel, mum, agen and agen, to purwide Tony, at my own cost, vith a suit o' clothes as 'ud be the makin' on him, and form his mind in infancy for those pursuits as I hope the family o' the Vellers vill alvays dewote themselves to. Tony, my boy, tell the lady wot them clothes are, as grandfather says, father ought to let you vear.'

'A little white hat and a little sprig weskit and little knee cords and little top boots and a little green coat with little bright buttons and a little welwet collar,' replied Tony, with great readiness and no stops. 'That's the cos-toom, mum,' said Mr. Weller, 'once make sich a model on him as that, and you'd say he wos a angel!'

Tony Weller, junior, grew up too long ago to go about expressing the opinion that one's duty was solely to oneself; that one lived but once, and should have nothing but a good time; that social responsibility is an effete superstition; and that loyalty to parents is an exploded myth. It is a pity, for I should like to know what both his father and his grandfather would have replied.

HUMOROUS VERSE

IT is stated that every piece in a recent anthology of humorous verse was first 'tried on the dog, and was included only if the dog laughed. The scheme, on paper, sounds all right; but I doubt if it has any value, for more than one reason. The first is, that if a reader himself is funny his audience will laugh, no matter what he reads, and therefore the test is worthless. Was there not a famous comedian who backed himself to convulse a gathering with the Lord's Prayer? And then look at John Henderson's success with 'John Gilpin', which is an inevitable selection in every book of this kind. Night after night in the seventeen-eighties Henderson filled a London theatre with people whose one idea was to hear that ballad recited. Well, I am as sound an admirer as any of the gay simplicity and playfulness of Cowper's narrative, but it has never excited in me more than quiet amusement; I have never laughed aloud at any of the hero's adventures.

It must also be remembered that the verse

at which one laughs loudest can be very poor stuff when printed. Its whole purpose probably is to be spoken and listened to; never read by oneself alone. I was in a music-hall recently where a comedian, new to me, whose name I forget, but whose sub-title was 'Almost a Gentleman', had the house in convulsions with a series of burlesque ballads, every line of which was a wild absurdity. But I doubt if any anthologist would bring himself to print one of them. He will probably content himself with the classical example, which is 'Q's' travesty of the 'Kissing Cup Race' school of recitation.

We all know, however, of people who will laugh at anything. We have all suffered at the theatre from those persons who come in late, high-flown with merriment and wine, and first trample us underfoot and then deafen us with their appreciation. They might be called 'The Second-liqueur Brigade'. To a large extent they bring their hilarity with them, but such humour as the play supplies they greet with a heartiness that must sometimes surprise the actors and, if he be present and can any longer be surprised at anything, even the author. With such listeners the humorous anthologist could run his work into as many volumes as the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

And we should then meet again with all

the old impostors. For when we come to examine them, we find that some of the most famous humorous poems won their triumphs rather easily. Take for example 'The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay'. I have never been able actually to laugh at that; at the most one is tickled by the canter of the lines. That a chaise should totter along for a hundred years and then suddenly disintegrate—is that so diverting an idea? But an anthology of humorous verse without it (especially as it is out of copyright) is almost unthinkable. And let me ask—but this is probably even more heretical—if 'The Heathen Chinee' is as convulsing as tradition would have it? The perfidy of Ah Sin is told with great gusto and perfect directness (and when it was first published, in the eighteen-sixties, with an added spice because it was told in a metre then sacred to Swinburne), but at what point does the reader burst into a guffaw? Yet its exclusion is, I suppose, an impossibility. On the other hand, when, in Bret Harte's 'Further Language from Truthful James', Mr. Jones suggests that the bones of prehistoric man discovered by Mr. Brown were those of one of his, Jones's, lost mules, and Mr. Brown retaliates by admitting that

> he must have been at fault:
> It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones's family vault;

there is a moment of surprise when laughter is compulsory.

Surprise being one of the springs of laughter, poems with unexpected twists in them must stand a better chance with an audience than mere humorous narrations such as 'John Gilpin' and *The Ingoldsby Legends*. Some of the puns, for example, in Tom Hood's amazingly dexterous ballads cannot but lead to sounds of delight or even pain. The turn in Mr. Belloc's 'Lines written after visiting the Chinese Restaurant' ought to cause any one to laugh:—

> Birds in their little nests agree
> With Chinamen, but not with me;

but other of that engaging wit's verses, pointed though they are, might cause no more than a smile in listeners. Mr. Bentley's famous poem on Sir Christopher Wren in his *Biography for Beginners* would probably provoke actual laughter:

> Sir Christopher Wren
> Said, "I am going to dine with some men.
> If anybody calls,
> Say I am designing St. Paul's";

but a companion poem which I personally find funnier might be received in silence, however

appreciative that silence might be; for, after all, do we need to be noisy?

> After dinner, Erasmus
> Told Colet not to be "blas'mous,"
> Which Colet, with some heat,
> Requested him to repeat.

(I quote from memory.) And that is why I am most doubtful if the laughing aloud test is sound, because so much of the best humour does not lend itself to the desired explosions. Some indeed needs the eye rather than the ear as the avenue to the brain: Lewis Carroll's 'Jabberwocky', for example. No one can deny that that is a classic of humorous verse, but the grotesque words need seeing for their quality to be fully appreciated; when read aloud they may merely be foreign terms or mispronunciation.

Of most epigrams it may be said that the sting is in the tail; but surprise is hardly the word to apply. The famous epitaph which Piron, the French wit, who had a feud with the Immortal Forty, wrote upon himself, to the effect that he was nothing, 'not even Academicien', has an unexpected turn, but one knows that something is coming or he would not have written it. One is prepared. But who could necessarily anticipate any such ending as the following lyric which the American humorist Ben King provides in each stanza?

If I should die to-night
And you should come to my cold corpse and say,
Weeping and heartsick o'er my lifeless clay—
If I should die to-night,
And you should come in deepest grief and woe—
And say: 'Here's that ten dollars that I owe,'
I might arise in my large white cravat
And say, 'What's that?'

If I should die to-night,
And you should come to my cold corpse and kneel,
Clasping my bier to show the grief you feel,
I say, if I should die to-night,
And you should come to me, and there and then
Just even hint 'bout paying me that ten,
I might arise the while,
But I'd drop dead again.

—That is very American. Another American effort is Gelett Burgess's:

The window has four little panes;
But one have I.
The window panes are in its sash:
I wonder why.

The classical examples of English comic surprise verse are, of course, in Calverley; but an earlier piece, which Calverley would have known, is in *The Ingoldsby Legends*, about the man who, through many gruesome lines, obviously is about to commit suicide, and then 'begins to shave'. Calverley's 'Shelter' opens thus, in what might

be called the *oscuro-chiaro* convention. The *oscuro*:

> By the wide lake's margin I mark'd her lie—
> The wide, weird lake where the elders sigh—
> A young fair thing with a shy, soft eye;
> And I deem'd that her thoughts had flown
> To her home, and her brothers and sisters dear,
> As she lay there watching the dark, deep mere.
> All motionless, all alone.

Then the *chiaro* ending:

> She had gone from the ken of ungentle men!
> Yet scarce did I mourn for that;
> For I knew she was safe in her own home then,
> And, the danger past, would appear again,
> For she was a water-rat.

But funnier are these four lines, from the same unerring hand:

> I know not if in others' eyes
> She seemed almost divine;
> But far beyond a doubt it lies
> That she did not in mine.

—That is a real surprise.

More serious but also depending upon the impact of the last line, is this by Mr. Oliver Herford:

> EARTH
> If this little world to-night
> Suddenly should fall through space
> In a hissing, headlong flight,
> Shrivelling from off its face,

As it falls into the sun,
  In an instant every trace
Of the little crawling things—
  Ants, philosophers, and lice,
Cattle, cockroaches, and kings,
  Beggars, millionaires, and mice,
Men and maggots all as one
  As it falls into the sun . . .
Who can say but at the same
  Instant from some planet far
A child may watch us and exclaim:
  'See the pretty shooting star!'

W. S. Gilbert no doubt could have managed the device of surprise with skill, but I recall nothing as I write except the opening of 'Etiquette':

The *Ballyshannon* foundered off the coast of Cariboo,
And down in fathoms many went the captain and the crew;
Down went the owners—greedy men, whom greed of gain allured:
Oh, dry the starting tear! for they were heavily insured.

One of the best English purely comic surprise ballads that exists is the work of Henry S. Leigh. It is called 'The Twins', and begins thus:

In form and feature, face and limb,
  I grew so like my brother
That folks got taking me for him,
  And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
  It reach'd an awful pitch:
For one of us was born a twin
  And not a soul knew which.

It has this tremendous finish:

> Our close resemblance turn'd the tide
> Of my domestic life;
> For somehow my intended bride
> Became my brother's wife.
> In short, year after year the same
> Absurd mistakes went on;
> And when I died—the neighbours came
> And buried brother John!

All the best limericks have a last line which, although the rhyme helps the listener to the final absurdity, ought not to be absolutely anticipatable. It is the great defect of Edward Lear's limericks that they merely repeat the first rhyme and add nothing to the narrative. His openings can be so good and his conclusions so tame. The limerick, however, even if it did, in Max Beerbohm's phrase, add a string to the British lyre, can hardly, I imagine, even in this free day, come into the anthologist's purview.

For concentrated effort it would be hard to beat the famous *Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes*. I have an idea that Captain Graham did not actually invent the form—there is, indeed, something rather like it in Max Adeler—but he carried it farther than any predecessor. Here are two compressed examples which have never been excelled:

AUNT ELIZA

In the drinking-well
  Which the plumber built her
Aunt Eliza fell . . .
  We must buy a filter.

WASTE

I had written to Aunt Maud,
Who was on a trip abroad,
When I heard she'd died of cramp—
Just in time to save the stamp.

The American humorist, Mr. Franklin P. Adams, gives us the following catch, which should be very popular with reciters:

THE RICH MAN

The rich man has his motor-car,
  His country and his town estate.
He smokes a fifty-cent cigar
  And jeers at Fate.

He frivols through the livelong day,
  He knows not Poverty, her pinch.
His lot seems light, his heart seems gay;
  He has a cinch.

Yet though my lamp burns low and dim,
  Though I must slave for livelihood—
Think you that I would change with him?
  You bet I would!

A variant of that *motive* has lately been popular, but I have never seen it in print, and give it now only from memory with reconstructions. No

anthologist who was intent upon laughter could leave it out:

JIM'S GIRL

Jim's girl is tall and fast;
  My girl is short and slow;
Jim's girl wears silky things;
  My girl wears calico.
Jim's girl has wit and fun;
  My girl is dull and good.
But d'you think I'd change my girl for Jim's?
  By Gosh, I would!

Of course, if the anthology is to be effective, all these poems should be printed with the last line on the next page. It would make an ugly book, but it is the only way to be fair to the authors.

THE FALL

THE voice of P. F., as we called him, meaning Plain Facts, was, as usual, audible above the rest. 'Superstition', he was again saying, 'is rubbish. Look at it squarely and admit that it couldn't be anything else. A new moon is born and, because when I see it I happen to be indoors and see it through the window, for a whole month I am to be unlucky. Could anything be more ridiculous? A moon myriads of miles from this planet and a piece of transparent material that was not invented until comparatively recent times—how could they have any fatal association with my insignificant life? Was there no bad luck on the earth before glass was first made? Absurd.'

'All I can say', the other man replied, 'is that if I see the new moon through glass I am depressed for days.'

'You ought to be in an asylum', said P. F. 'And then this sweep business. Your contention is that you won some money because you kissed your hand to a sweep on the morning of

the race. My poor fish, how can you harbour such delusions? Tell me in what way a sweep passing along Sloane Street at nine in the morning can, by merely being kissed at—and not even noticing it—influence the running of horses that afternoon at Newmarket. Could greater nonsense be invented? Yet you believe it, and you the father of a family. You actually believe that it was because you kissed your hand to the sweep that you won.'

'I believe that if I didn't kiss my hand to a sweep I should live to repent it.'

'Well, of course,' said P. F. and, muttering, withdrew.

'What he doesn't understand', said the other man, 'is that superstition is temperamental. It has nothing to do with logic. It's the child of fear. Poor human nature has so many buffets and crosses that no wonder it clutches at any straw that might give it confidence and comfort, and is afraid to treat with disrespect even the most foolish observances. I know that, looked at from one point of view, it is insane to suppose that kissing one's hand to a total stranger whose occupation is to clean chimneys will change the course of events in your favour. But I haven't the pluck not to. I daren't take the risk.'

That conversation occurred some weeks ago, and it came back to me as I listened to P. F.

yesterday, talking with half his usual exuberance, but looking very complacent and dressy (figuratively speaking) in a white sheet.

'I had a very curious experience last evening', he said, 'and one which proves how foolish it is even for the wisest to be certain about anything or to take any strong dogmatic line.'

We all gasped and looked at each other.

'I have been having a lot of trouble with my teeth', he continued, 'since I made the mistake, so prevalent a few years ago, of having them out. I believe that many dentists now admit, when it is too late, that they were wrong in this wholesale extraction. Much good does that do us, for you can't put them back. Anyway, in common with thousands of other Jugginses I fell for it, and I can safely say that I have never enjoyed a meal since, and have rarely been free from indigestion. A fortnight ago, having decided that the time had come for a new set, I went to a man with a terrific reputation; and I must admit that he is doing me very well. But new teeth take a lot of breaking-in; you have to give them only very short innings, and take them out before any serious irritation or inflammation is caused. But of course, poor devils, you all know this: it is the bitter experience of the middle-aged wherever civilization has spread its blight.

'I saw my dentist again, for the tenth time in

as many days, yesterday evening, and he made me, as at each visit, a shade more comfortable. I told him as I left that, as I was going to a men's dinner-party and it would be simple to leave the room and change them for the old, I would try the new ones and keep them in as long as possible. You can't break away from your lady at a mixed party; but with men it's all right. He urged me to do this, and off I went.

'Well, it was a bigger party than I was expecting and we sat down twelve; but with the soup who should come in but a late guest. You see what happened? He made us thirteen.

' "That's awkward," said one of my neighbours. "One must be careful not to be the first to get up."

' "Or is it the last to sit down?" I asked.

' "No, it's the first to get up," my other neighbour said, and he was supported by all around us.

'And then a terrible thing occurred: my teeth began to hurt. I made some kind of an effort with the fish, but only at the price of misery; and by the time I had attempted one mouthful of the saddle of lamb I was in agony. I was also exceedingly hungry.'

'But why didn't you go out and change them?' I asked. 'I remember how scornful you were

of superstition a little while ago in this very room.'

'Yes,' he said. 'That's it. I was scornful of superstition; I'm not sure I'm not still scornful of it; but I hadn't the courage to rise. I couldn't be the first to get up. Call me what you like; I admit it. I'm beaten. I thought I was strong and sensible, but I'm just as weak and idiotic as any old woman—as any of you. So there I sat, starving, with tears in my eyes from the raw place, unable to eat, terrified to go, ashamed to pop the new set into my napkin and suddenly turn into a centenarian. Was ever the humiliation of an anti-superstitionist more thorough?

'Even when coffee and cigars arrived no one moved. I looked round the table at each guest in turn, trying to will them to rise, but without the slightest success. Could they have been frightened too? At the end of a meal good hosts now and then leave their seats to promote mixing, but this one utterly failed in his duty. Could he have been frightened too? The pain increased, my emptiness became a separate ache.

'And then at length, at ten o'clock, the same man who had come in last—the thirteenth guest—solved the problem by pleading another engagement and saying Good-night. Need I add that I was hot upon his heels?

' "I suppose you think I'm for it," he said as

he put on his coat. "But I don't believe in things like that. Surely you don't."

'And—will you credit it?—I was base enough to say, "No, of course not." What cowards we are! "No, of course not," I said, and, popping in the old set, hurried off to have some supper.'

LETTERS TO OLD FRIENDS

I. THE HORSE

YOU may wonder why I choose this moment to address a letter to you. I will tell you. I was riding the other day in a friend's motor-car on our way to Lord's and in a narrow street a heavy van ahead of us was being drawn at a walking pace by a pair of you. We could not pass it until the next turning, the interval of time being sulphurously filled by my friend's remarks about the wickedness of allowing you in London at all. 'Monstrous' was the mildest of his adjectives. 'Monstrous.' It was while I reflected that it was for you that this London street, in common with most of the other streets and roads of the world, had been made, and that the mechanical vehicle in which we were sitting is a contrivance of mushroom growth, that I decided that the time had come to express a little sympathy with you; for I have the feeling that you like work and resent your eclipse and the exclusion from the metropolis and other cities which, I fear, nothing can now prevent.

You used to fall down a good deal, I remember, and you often had difficulty in pulling heavy loads over slippery ground; but London was a jollier place when you dominated it and there were drivers instead of chauffeurs. The reins were more human than the steering-wheel, and chauffeurs are not really nice men. They have no sense of locality; they dislike helping with the luggage and they make no soothing hissing sounds when they are in the garage. Our characters generally were the better for having constantly with us 'a noble animal with a leg at each corner', and for seeing at every turn your dignified countenance and comfortable curves. Also how much quieter was it when there were only your hoofs and bells instead of the insolent horns that now affront our ears and destroy our nerves!

There were equine superstitions, too, which amused us to test and which are now obsolete. It used to be a saying in the days anterior to motor-cars—and I have proved it to be true again and again—that no one could cross London Bridge without seeing a white horse. It used to be said that, having seen a white horse, we were certain, searching about, to see a red-haired girl. The white horses are no longer visible, and red-haired girls, I suppose, have vanished with them. At any rate, how seldom do we see

them! And what of the sparrows that once feasted so bravely upon the overplus of your nosebags, for you were ever a careless feeder? How can they subsist to-day? Little did that scientific innovator think, when he constructed the first petrol-driven engine, that he was at one blow depriving London, not only of half her sparrows, but of all her Titian locks.

Had the motor never been invented, I cannot see how the world would have been any the worse: we should merely have had to start earlier for our engagements—no more. The best things in England, at any rate, all came about before the contraption was thought of, and while you were still 'the friend of man'—such as Shakespeare, and beer, and dog-carts (how exciting a ride in a dog-cart used to be!), and Dickens, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Old Crome, and the waltz, and Alfred Mynn, and Gilbert and Sullivan; while two of the worst things in the world—jazz and the War—have happened since. It looks as though man made a mistake in treating your friendship so lightly, doesn't it? He must fancy himself very rich in friends to have flung you off like this.

And what of your future? Your future will lie on farms, in the hunting field, in the polo ground and on the racecourse. Farmers, however, do not count on your trustworthiness as once

they did, for the mechanical tractor has lured them away; and the people who can afford to hunt to-day are too often the people who prefer Margate to Melton Mowbray. But your power on the turf grows stronger every minute. Indeed the activities that you set in motion by competing in races would certainly astonish and perhaps appal you. When I leave the paddock where you walk so sedately and display so modestly your lovely form and glistening coat, and pass into the ring, I am appalled. That such a beautiful creature as you should be the cause of all this ugly and noisy avarice is outrageous and distressing. When I am knocked down in Fleet Street by the hurrying lout with the 'first winner', I wonder why betting is allowed; when I follow the advice of the prophets and find again that they know no more than the ignorant, I deplore it once more.

None the less, it is, and if you would like to make any acknowledgment of your gratification at receiving this letter, you would more than discharge the fancied obligation if you could find out the winners of the St. Leger and Cambridgeshire and whisper them to me. The information must, of course, be accurate. I would then fulfil the dream of all our lives and bring off such a string of doubles as would at once give me back all overdue revenge and cripple the commission

agency world for years to come. Do this, my dear fellow, and ensure my peace of mind for ever.

II. THE COW

My particular debt of gratitude to you, O Cow, is connected with nothing so obvious as milk. Milk no doubt is a great boon, and I remember a glass of it on a cold autumnal morning at an inn at Evesham some years ago which I have always believed saved my life. For I had been walking through Worcestershire all night, and this was at 6 a.m., and the milk was hot. Apparently in that stronghold of market-gardeners hot milk in the early hours is a favourite and tried restorative. Well, but for you I should not have had it; nor should I have enjoyed it so much or have remembered it so long and so gratefully but for a certain spirit that had found its way into it.

For your industry in providing the world with milk, unstrengthened by alien ingredients if not always undiluted, you have probably been sufficiently thanked. Two of the most famous tributes to you are in verse, one by the Sisters Taylor early in the nineteenth century:

> Thank you, pretty cow, that made
> Pleasant milk to soak my bread,
> Every day and every night,
> Warm and fresh and sweet and white.

and the other by Robert Louis Stevenson, at the end of it:

> The friendly cow, all red and white,
> I love with all my heart;
> She gives me cream with all her might
> To eat with apple-tart.

But have you been enough eulogized for your butter? That must have been a proud moment in your career when you heard that at one of the Wembley Exhibitions the Prince of Wales, on horseback, full size, was moulded in that honourable ally of the staff of life.

It would be tactless perhaps to say much about the Roast Beef of Old England, but I could wish that it did not so often come from distant lands in cold storage. . . .

It would be interesting to probe the mysteries that surprisingly surround you—you, who, one would have thought, were destined only to an obvious and straightforward career. That remarkable saltatory effort which is celebrated in nursery rhyme—how did you come to achieve that? And what could the provocation be that urged any one so sedate to jump over the moon? Knowing what we now do of your attitude to Daylight Saving we might expect you to have aggressive designs on the sun; but the poor inoffensive moon, why jump over her? And why so suddenly take on attributes that belong

more properly to the springbok, the antelope, the kangaroo? We shall probably never know. All we know is that your gymnastics caused the dog to laugh and the dish to turn eloper. Nor shall we know, although we might be able to hazard a guess, what tune your venerable ancestress died of.

But enough of conjecture; let me come to the point and say why I am inflicting this epistle upon you. It is because I want with all the emphasis that I can command to sound your praises as a travelling companion, the friend of the voyager. If I have had any pleasure in enriching my eyes it is due not a little to your kindly aid. I don't say that I should never have seen, but for you, as much of England, Scotland and Ireland as I have, Italy and France, Germany and Spain, Belgium and Austria, Greece and India, Japan and America and the West Indies—I don't go so far as to say that it was you who sent me on any of my travels; but I do with gratitude say this, that I should have been on those wanderings far less comfortable if it had not been for the society of two or three excellent cowhide bags.

III. THE DUCK

Madam, there is one blot on your fair fame and one only. You have supplied the cricket-

field with a word of dread. Why your egg, rather than any other, should have been chosen to typify by its shape the most ignominious numeral in the multiplication table I have no notion. A duck's egg is not more like a nought than the egg of the hen or the goose or the turkey, and indeed it is far less round than that of the pigeon and the owl. But it was upon your egg that fate fastened; it was you who were set apart to humiliate those who fail to score.

For the rest, you are the friend of man; in life you stand on your head in the water with the most enchanting insouciance, and when the day arrives your gift of blending melodiously with sage and onions is beyond praise. Peas be with you!

IV. THE CAT

Let me admit at once that I never was what is called a cat-lover, although I have had many flirtations; but to-day I view you with positive dread, for the simple reason that I am often in a garden where there are tame birds. The more I see of birds the less I like cats.

There is no suggestion of blame in this remark; I know that it is your natural destiny to prowl and crouch and spring and kill and devour; and so long as I myself eat cattle and sheep, poultry and game, I have no case against you. Provi-

dence has ordained our habits. But there is this difference, that I don't play with and torture my viands before I slaughter and consume them. I don't set myself up as a judge over you for behaving differently; I merely record the fact that you are the less likeable for that reason.

I have been honoured in my time by the friendship, or at any rate tolerance (for you are an inscrutable creature, and one never knows) of several of your species; but to-day I am without any. Best and sweetest, and apparently simplest of them, was a Blue Persian who wandered into the house out of the night, as though dropped from a dark sky, stayed for several weeks, long enough to capture and hold every heart, and then as casually vanished into the night again. It is your nature not to endure ties, not to be accountable to any master, not to be bothered with such mechanical canine nonsense as loyalty. 'The dog,' as the old poem begins, 'will come when he is called; the cat will turn away'; and one at any rate of the reasons why you prefer to walk by yourself has been told by a writer of genius in a book called *The Just So Stories*.

But if I may be a little out of conceit with you, I experience nothing but joy in the company of your young. The thought that a kitten will one day be a cat, never obtrudes to spoil one's pleasure in the beauty and playfulness of those exqui-

site little creatures. I say elsewhere in this book something about the comically and attractive galvanic movements of little pigs; there is something seductively flattering in the clumsy attentions of any kind of puppy; and even babies seem to possess a certain fascination; but of all the immature creatures that I know, none have such delicious personalities, such frolicsome spirits, such unalloyable grace as your children when they are very young. I say nothing at the moment about the irresistible charm of a kitten's face; it is the impossibility of its making a single movement that is not beautiful which is so remarkable. If only we could keep them kittens for ever!

Praise of their children is not necessarily the shortest cut to a father's or mother's affection, and there have even been cases where parents would prefer to be esteemed for their own sakes. If I cannot admire you as I should like, I can at any rate draw attention to some of your services to mankind, especially when mankind is immature. But for you many a pantomime would lack half its attraction. What would Whittington be without his cat? What would those punctual Christmas boots be without Puss in them? The spectacle of the plump Principal Girl who often impersonates Puss may be one of those things that make a cat laugh, but that doesn't matter to children. To them she is perfect, and by reason

of her charm, her voice and her steps, their admiration for you too grows. And latterly you have increased the world's debt to you by lending your face and figure (more or less) to that glorious and most fertile of humorists and soldiers of fortune, Felix. I admit that a stranger to that master spirit, but acquainted with you, entering a cinema while one of the episodes in his amazing career was being unreeled, might be in doubt as to the animal that Felix represented; but that also doesn't matter. What matters is that Felix the Cat added enormously to the gaiety of nations, and that before there could be Felix there had to be you.

V. THE PIG

Pig of my Heart,—So much of our indebtedness to you is taken for granted that I want to write you a few lines of appreciation. For your friendliness to man knows no abatement; I believe that every day you come to our rescue more and more; every day, all over England, to the traveller's question, 'What have you for lunch?' the answer is more frequently returned, 'I'm sorry, but there's nothing but eggs and bacon.' The innkeeper's sorrow matters nothing, because directly we hear the word bacon our hearts leap up, the reason being that, as a wise man once said, 'However good bacon and eggs may be at

breakfast, they are far better at meals to which they don't belong.'

A lot of rubbish has been talked (and sung) about the roast beef of Old England. The national dish of this great country is bacon—a gift from you.

Eggs no doubt can be an agreeable accessory, but it would be an ungracious act in a letter intended to celebrate your merit to stress them overmuch. Bacon alone is food for the gods. If I step aside and quote from Hogg's *Life of Shelley* it is not from any facetious motive, but (in case you have missed it) to let you know how one of the least material of men, an ethereal being who is usually thought of as a vegetarian, a beautiful if ineffectual angel, esteemed you. It is told, then, how Hogg and Shelley once met at a wayside inn and Hogg was eating bacon. At first this was to Shelley a cause of distress. 'But he gradually approached the dish and, studying the bacon attentively, said, "So this is bacon!" He then ate a small piece. "It is not so bad either!" More was ordered; he devoured it voraciously.

' "Bring more bacon!" It was brought and eaten.

' "Let us have another plate."

' "I am very sorry, gentlemen," said the old woman, "but indeed I have no more in the house."

'The Poet was angry at the disappointment and rated her.

' "What business has a woman to keep an inn who has not enough bacon in the house for her guests? She ought to be killed!" '

There, that is how you struck the author of *Alastor*. What Shakespeare thought of bacon we shall never know.

But bacon is not all. What of ham? What of brawn? What of pork? What of Bath chap? What of sausages? All these blessings we owe to you. Forgive me, however, if I am dwelling too long on what, after all, cannot be unmixedly agreeable hearing for yourself, since, in order to give us these noble dishes, you must first have passed away. I recognize that even my enthusiasm (and Shelley's) may not wholly remove the distastefulness of so much emphasis on your decease. Let me pay you a compliment that can be received with rejoicing and say that it is impossible to imagine what mothers and nurses would, on occasion, have done without your assistance. That game (derived from the exploits of your five children) which they play with babies' toes—what oceans of tears it has dried or prevented! What myriad wailings it has changed into fat chuckles! There is no music so adorable as the laughter of an infant, and no infant's laughter is ever quite so irresistibly musical as

when its bath is over and 'This little pig' sets in. Who first wrote that story? I wonder: our earliest meeting with what is called picaresque literature: 'a style of fiction', says my dictionary, 'dealing with the adventures of rogues'. 'This little pig went to market' was the version with which I was persuaded into good humour; 'this little pig stayed at home; this little pig had roast beef; this little pig had none; and this little pig cried, "*Wee, wee, wee*" all the way home.' Your first, second, third and fourth children were interesting but ordinary; the child of genius was the fifth. I can still recall the agonies yet ecstasies of apprehension, as his arrival drew near and nearer. I wonder who wrote it. The pundits of *Notes and Queries* must be roped in to discover this (after you) world's benefactor.

So much for your children in nursery lore. Your children in actual life are adorable. I can think of no young creatures so full of caprices and comic vivacity as eight or nine little pigs, black for choice. They are the embodiment of curiosity and fear, impudence and doubt, quicksilver and fun. All maturity is a decline from the freshness and innocence of infancy; but in your case there is a wider gulf fixed than with almost any other animal. The little pig is lost more completely in the big pig than any one would think possible. I am sorry for this,

although it is the table's gain. As for the little pig dressed for the gourmet, his place in literature is assured.

Finally, a word of thanks for your assistance in helping us out in invective—I am sure not by your own wish, but very usefully none the less. The people that we don't like, whether for particular or general reasons—what do we call them? We ought really to search our minds for the accurate epithet minutely applicable to each; but we are too lazy for that. So—very unfairly—we fall back on you and merely say they are pigs. The child who eats too quickly, the man who won't have the window open in the railway carriage, the woman who edges her way unjustly into a queue, the boy who demurs at the punctual bath—each is rapidly characterized as a pig. As I say, it saves us trouble to think no further and to borrow your name in this way; but it isn't fair, because they did not go to you to learn these habits: they were behaving naturally.

I wonder if you ever tick off the pigs you object to by calling them men. Or are you too well-mannered?

VI. THE RABBIT

Dear Bunny,—I may praise (as I have done) the beguiling value of the adventures of the five little pigs symbolized by the five infantile toes;

but of course when we think of real comforters of the young, you leave the pig, large or small, far behind; because not only are you also a hero of legend and rhyme, but in soft and fluffy counterfeit presentment you provide actual intimate comforting companionship, such as no bristled quadruped could possibly supply. India-rubber pigs may create momentary excitement by being blown up and shrinking away with an anguished cry; but your hold on a child can last for years.

I wonder if you know to what extent the harassed mother and nurse have to thank you for your services as a comforter and sedative? You may be aware of your general ability to soothe: but I doubt if you have heard of your latest reincarnation. Let me tell you that there are now houses where what once were fretful and wakeful children have been transformed into 'perfect angels', and all by you, or rather by your image. But with a difference. The ordinary toy rabbit that is hugged at night is merely stuffed. These new and absolutely efficacious consolers consist of your outer integument only, inside which a hot-water bottle can be fitted. That was the stroke of genius! With this warm friend in their arms children not only sleep without tears, but actually clamour for the hour of bed-time to be put forward. This is a great triumph and you should be proud indeed.

As a legendary hero your place in the hearts of English children has latterly been strengthened by the genius of Miss Beatrix Potter, whose pen and pencil have transformed you into a nursery deity. I don't know to what extent you are a reader. It may be that you never burrow into a book, not even into those written by the author of *Ten Thousand a Year*. Let me then tell you that under the name of *Mr. Peter Rabbit* you have spread delight in millions of homes. Your adventures are related in a series of little tomes which have created what might be called a new domestic mythology, wherein, although other animals cut no small figure, you are the chief—the Jupiter, the Jove, the Zeus. Ducks and mice, squirrels and frogs hold the young breathless with admiration and even awe, but it is *Mr. Peter Rabbit* whose image is most distinctly and deeply graven on their hearts. In another word, you.

As *Mr. Peter Rabbit* you are a homely creature, filled with the ordinary concerns of life; with a wife, children, family cares, and also an excellent, if rather fanciful, tailor. But in an American epic known as *Uncle Remus* you are a tactician, an adventurer, a Macchiavelli. It is given to few creatures, and least of all what we call the dumb animals, to have so delighted two hemispheres. You rival *Mr. Pickwick* himself.

This being the case, let me assure you of the

sadness we all experience when, as we take our country walks in the gloaming, we hear the popping of the guns. It is true that restaurants must be able to include chicken cutlets in the menu; but still . . . Poor dear Bunny, I have often speculated on your feelings with regard to the action of Providence in giving you that white scut. A good rabbit would naturally question no divine decree, and yet you must be aware in your secret heart that but for that signal gleaming in the dusk, many of your relations would still be alive; yes, and kicking. Can it be that your friendliness to man is such that you would rather he had something to aim at in the evening than that you should attain comparative immortality? I (not being an Australian) can believe anything good of so alluring a creature as yourself. Besides, it is not as if, like France, you were ever faced by the peril of race-suicide.

VII. THE DOG

If I have some difficulty in addressing you it is because you are so various. When I write to a horse or a pig, the beginning is simple: I can say, 'Dear Horse,' 'Dear Pig.' True there are different kinds of horse, heavy and light, Suffolk punches and the Sons of Hurry On, but, speaking generally, a horse is a horse. 'Look at that horse,' we say, even if it is a polo pony.

Similarly, there are different kinds of pigs, from those sweet Auburns, loveliest porkers of the plain, the Red Tamworths, to the Black and the White and the Speckled Berkshires; but none the less, when we see a pig, no matter what its breed, we say, 'Look at that pig.'

But with you it is different. Only when your parents have been carelessly assorted do we say, 'Look at that dog'; on all other occasions we say, 'Look at that Sealyham,' 'Look at that Peek', 'Look at that Bloodhound,' and this being so, I cannot begin, 'Dear Dog.'

Indeed, I wonder very much what kind of dog is meant when we say dog alone: which of all of your numerous varieties is the essential primitive dog. Which of you accompanied a lady into the Ark? or has that remote type been improved utterly away?

I might, of course, have begun by addressing you as 'Dear Tray', but that name, which appears once to have been almost the only one that a dog ever had, is obsolete. I doubt if any dogs are called Tray now. I have never heard of one. Or Fido? My dictionary tells me nothing about the word 'tray' that can in any way link it up to you. The derivation is from the Old English 'tryg', a trough, and to my ear 'tryg' is a better name for a dog than our modern sophistication of it. One can say 'Tryg' sharply and with a

certain decision, and that is good when you don't behave yourself. Tryg will perhaps be the name of my next canine friend.

If I had ever been dragged from the waves by a Newfoundland, I should probably address this letter to 'My dear Rescuer'; but that never happened to me. And, by the way, who ever sees a Newfoundland now? And who ever sees a St. Bernard?—by whom equally I might have been saved from the perils of snow and ice, but never was. Every dog, says a proverb, has his day; and apparently too many of you have had yours, especially the larger ones. After the Alsatian the dogs that seem to be in highest esteem at the present moment are small, and of these the Cairn is by no means least popular. It may be that in the near future there will be as many stuffed Cairns in the Natural History Museum as there now are Peeks. Do I shock you when I refer to the array of defunct champions in the glass-cases there, with their glass eyes, terribly like life? There is one of each of you normally, but the gallant little gentlemen and ladies from Pekin are in profusion, all bearing famous names.

You—I mean you as the representative of dogdom in general—must be greatly surprised by these rises and falls in popularity which the different varieties of you experience. Our fickle-

ness must both amuse you and perplex; or do you accept and pardon all, reflecting on our devotion to you in the mass?

This devotion, real enough although sometimes a matter of mode, has been of steady growth. It was not always with us. I wonder if you know that when, some eighty years ago, Sir Edwin Landseer, the artist, who spent his life among members of your species and made many of them immortal, suggested to Sydney Smith that he should paint his portrait, the witty Canon replied with the scriptural question, 'Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?' That was a good joke then, but to-day it would mean very little, because to-day Landseer would be in such demand as a portrait painter of the dominant animal that not only would he never have time to invite a man, as such, and no matter how illustrious, to be painted, but clerics—even archbishops—piqued at the craze, might have themselves made up as dogs in order to get into his studio. In this attitude of devotion to you we may soon be taking one more leaf from the book of the Egyptians, who held you in such sanctity that when one of you died members of the household shaved as a sign of mourning. It was the Egyptians who named Sirius the dog star and venerated it. Had Pythagoras never been in Egypt and shared this devotion he might

not have chosen you as the most fitting living receptacle of the spirit of his best-loved disciples. But a certain tribe of Ethiopians went farther than the Egyptians, who merely worshipped you. These people made one of you their King.

I mentioned Newfoundlands and St. Bernards a little while ago. But the tables can be most heroically turned and man become the rescuer too. A friend of mine was crossing the Atlantic a few weeks ago when among the passengers was the owner of a very fine collie. This creature had a happy way with him that had endeared him to the whole ship. He was, I suppose, nominally, like all of his kind in a big liner, in the charge of the chief butcher; but during the daytime he was on deck with his master. On one sad morning, in an excited moment, gambolling too recklessly, he went overboard.

His master rushed to the captain and demanded that the ship be stopped.

'Impossible,' said the captain.

'But my dog is overboard,' said the passenger.

'I'm sorry, but we can't stop for a dog.'

'You would have to stop if a man fell overboard?'

'Of course,' said the captain, and the passenger immediately leapt into the sea.

I wish I could end the story by saying that this magnificent ruse was successful. Unhappily,

although the master was rescued, the collie was drowned.

That French cynicism, 'The more I see of men the more I like dogs,' must give you enormous satisfaction, and I wish we could collect your views as to ourselves. The more you see of dogs, do you the more like men?

NOTE

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E. V. L.

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